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In Tasman's Land.

Gleams and Dreams of the Great North-West.



Published for the
Emu Bay Railway Company, Limited.



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Beattie, Photo, Hobart

A Peep from the Train Window.

In Tasman's Land,

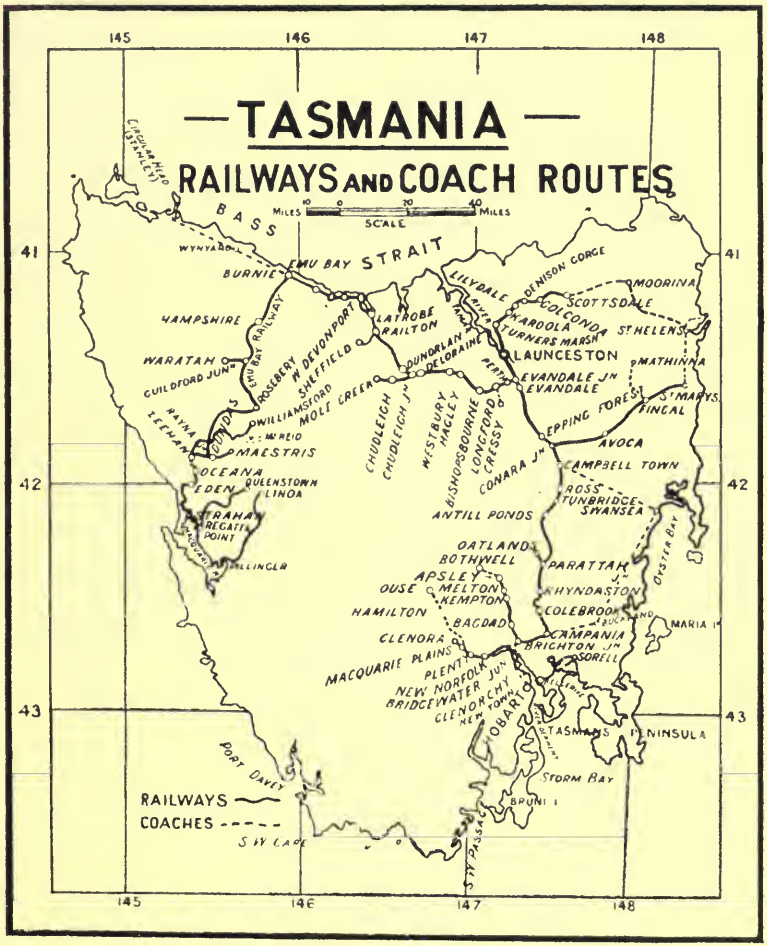
Gleams and Dreams of the Great North-West,

By J. Sterling



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LIMITED.

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In Tasman's Land.

CHAPTER I.

THE BECKONING OF THE MYRTLES.

"It's 'all clear aft' on the old trail—the trail that is always new."—Kipling.

THE Flora slid imperceptibly into the stream, and the long-expected holiday had really begun at last.

As she dropped down the Yarra, the smoke of the Melbourne factories and the rattle of the lorries in Flinders Street faded gradually away, and, with every revolution of the propeller, work and worry fell further and further astern.

"Yes, sir," said the American mining engineer, in the smoking-room, "they call California 'God's country'—and I believe they are right; but I reckon that you're not going to count too many flies on Tasmania, anyhow." He was a shrewd, intelligent, well-read and much-travelled American. His clear-cut features and open gaze inspired confidence, and one could not help feeling that, with such a recommendation, the

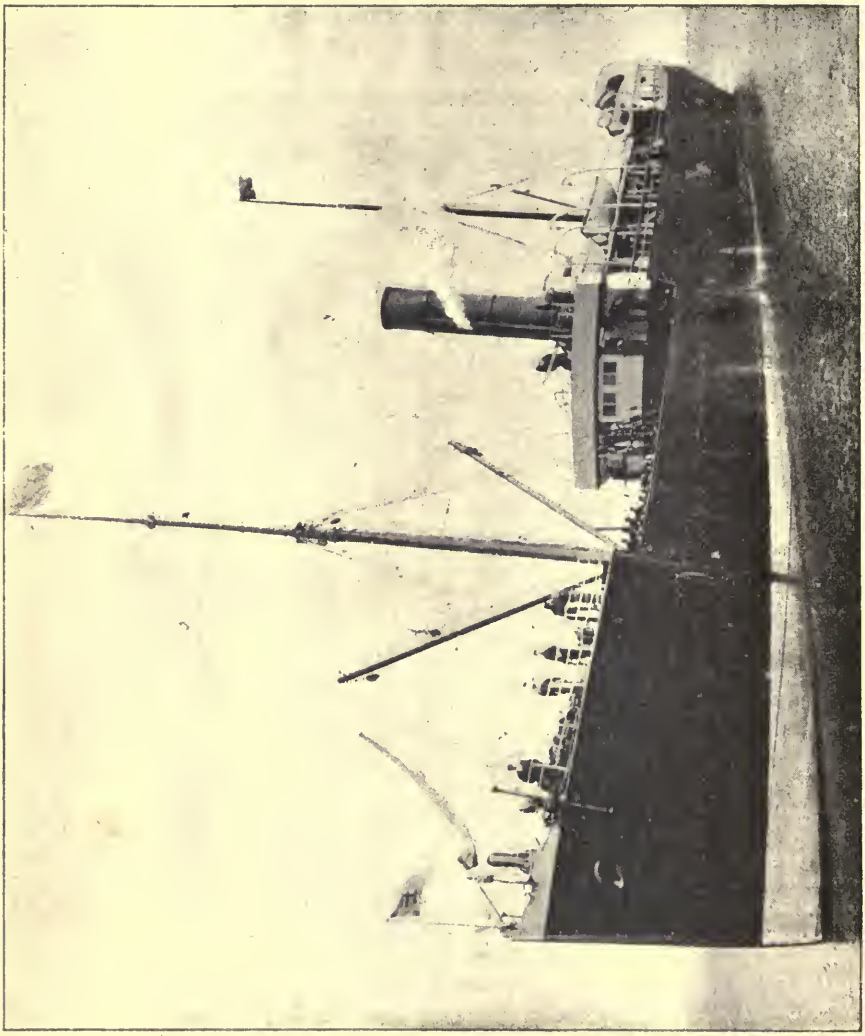
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holiday trip was not likely to be a disappointing one. After a prolonged residence in Melbourne, it was rest and change, even to listen to the crisp accent of New York, and to hear the fresh and unprejudiced comments of this citizen of no mean city upon matters which one was accustomed to regard as settled for good and all. He actually ventured to suggest that even coloured labour was better than no labour at all for developing the sugar industry. His views upon the legislative restriction of hours of labour were enough to make an advanced thinker rock on his foundations. Moreover, he declared that the United States had prospered exceedingly in commerce and manufactures without what he scoffingly described as socialistic legislation, and he further averred that there were more professional politicians in Australia than he could shake a stick at. The freshness, the candour, the breezy unconventionality of the New Yorker's criticisms acted positively like a tonic.

One felt that the holiday was doing one good already, and when the critic tilted his cap over his eyes, stuck his cigar in the corner of his mouth, at an angle of 45 degrees, and again announced his opinion that Tasmania was next door to "God's country," the



Union Co.'s S.S. "Flora," 1,273 Tons.

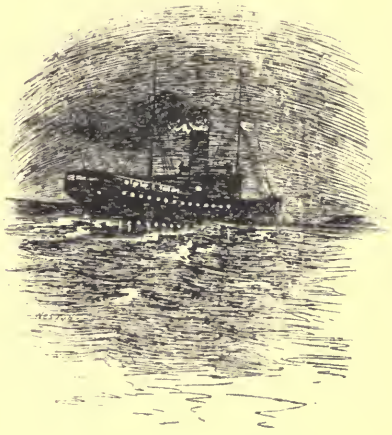


conviction slowly grew upon the listener's consciousness that the choice of a holiday trip had been well and wisely made, and that the Flora, outward-bound for Emu Bay, was steaming towards happiness and pure contentment.

Then, again, the Flora herself is a miniature Royal Mail steamer in all her appointments. Her saloon runs the full width of the ship. The roomy deck stateroom, the liberal menu, and the pervading air of comfort, and even of luxury, all tend to put a traveller into the right holiday mood.

Later on, when the New Yorker had retired below, and the gentleman from Northern Queensland had no one left to argue with, and the returned soldier had desisted from his conversational trekking after De Wet, and the married man had folded his rug like a husband, and silently slunk away in response to an appealing face in the doorway, darkness descended upon the waters. The Flora, having passed through the Rip, turned her nose a few points to the eastward, and thud, thudded steadily on her way to the north-west coast of the beautiful island that hangs like a pendant from the necklace of sapphire sea which adorns imperious Australia.

Leaning over the taffrail, and looking out across the waste of waters, one fell an easy victim to the influence of the moment. How far off was Melbourne? A million leagues at least. Those busy landsmen far away had dwindled to mere ants, hurrying, scuffling, and toiling for infinitesimal motives, which had almost ceased to be intelligible. "What is the good," one asks oneself, "of all this scheming, plotting, intriguing, working, fighting, and worrying by day and night, week in and week out, on the part



of our unhappy fellow-creatures ashore, till, "by and by Death comes and takes them where they never see the sun." Out here, under a dark sky, patched with the short, thick parallel clouds that mean a gale before the morning, there is a sense of space and mystery that enfolds and penetrates the imagination, making all the interests of the land seem puny and insignificant. The party cry, the Stock Exchange quotation, the latest bit of tittle-tattle, how inconceivably distant and unimportant they all seem when out yonder to windward, riding in the shadow of the rising gale, one can see in fancy the Zeehan and the Heemskirk, those two high-prowed ships, captained two and a half centuries ago by Abel Janzsoon Tasman, when that intrepid Netherlander swept on across yon stormy water, "the first that ever burst into that silent sea." One shivers. How cold it is as one sails in the wake of that great navigator of long ago, whose portrait, in courtly doublet and hose, with one hand on a globe, and the other grasping a



Emu Bay from Burnie.

Beattie, Photo., Hobart



compass, may still be seen in a private gallery in Hobart. One feels chilly. One goes to bed. And one awakes—in Burnie.

The sun pierced through a bank of grey clouds, and disclosed white seas breaking angrily on a reef that ran out at right angles to the shore. A breakwater and a jetty enclosed a sheltered spot, where the steamer lay, and, nestling under a semi-circle of hills, was the little township that has grown up on the shore of Emu Bay. Long ago, in 1823, a company was formed in London to rifle the fabulous treasures in distant Van Diemen's Land. They called it the Van Diemen's Land Company, and an enormous grant of land in this north-west district of the island was made over to it, under certain stringent conditions regarding improvement. For fifty years the company worked away at its territory. It cleared a great deal of rich agricultural land near Emu Bay, and it imported flocks and herds of the finest strains, and many skilled farmers and artisans also. The original shareholders died and were forgotten, but their children

and their grandchildren retained the shares, and the company, like a colossal Micawber, "waiting for something to turn up," continued in existence. Then at length, in 1870, the Mount Bischoff mine, one of the greatest tin mines in the world, was discovered, near the banks of the Waratah River, other mineral discoveries followed, a horse-train made its appearance, and then a railway. The V. D. L. Company awoke, and began to pay dividends to the grandchildren of the original shareholders, and Burnie grew up as the port of the new territory.

Mount Bischoff is well worth going to see, although it lies far beyond yonder semi-circular range of hills, cut, on the northern side, by a gorge, through which runs the Emu River. The Emu Bay Railway Company will carry you to the treasure-house in a day, and will show you many things to think about, on the journey. As the little train, running smoothly on the solidly-made line, climbs the steep gradient out of Burnie, one gets a glimpse of the Emu River, spanned by a bridge over which runs the Tasmanian Government line to Launceston. Then, swinging round the corner, one is among the hills at once, now peering down into deep ferny gullies close to the line, and now catching sight of distant ranges capped with snow and rising high above the lightwood and the myrtle nearer at hand. There is plenty of settlement near Burnie, for the land is rich, and the price of potatoes is phenomenally high. Drought-stricken folk on the other side of the Straits are willing to pay £5 a ton for this useful vegetable, and millionaires, as well as potatoes, are consequently being raised on the rich chocolate soil through which the railway runs. Some of these millionaires have souls above potatoes, and half-a-dozen miles back from Burnie a white rifle-target, with its black bull's-eye, stares through a vista in the thick timber, where dwells a possible member of some future Kolapore

Cup team. The ping of the bullet has for its accompaniment the plash of the Darling Creek, that falls with a drop of 150 feet into its basin close by. As the train climbs the gradient the view steadily enlarges, and to eyes accustomed to the softer tints of the Australian bush, the rich green of these Tasmanian gullies is full of the charm of freshness. Everywhere this brilliancy of colouring is apparent—and especially in the faces of the hardy, apple-cheeked children that are bred on the leaseholders' selections, and in the fettlers' huts along the line. Hardly



a house that has not half-a-dozen of them on view, and children, even more than tin or silver, are the real wealth of under-populated Tasmania.

Further inland the country becomes wilder, the soil poorer, the settlement sparser, the rosy-cheeked children more infrequent. Wide rolling plains cov-

ered with coarse native grass suddenly appear instead of the endless vistas of myrtle, stringy-bark, and celery-top pine, and these plains, if they serve no other purpose, are, at any rate, a pathetic reminder of those former occupants who have passed away for ever, submerged by the advancing wave of civilisation. The Hampshire Plains, as they are now called, bearing a name given to them by some surveyor who saw in them a fancied resemblance to far-off English downs, were originally cleared, it is supposed, by the blacks, as a hunting-ground. Year after year they burned away the timber, and opened up this wild park-land, so that the fresh grass could grow luxuriantly, and tempt wallaby and kangaroo to resort there, and then they came down upon the unsuspecting game, and used the hunting-spears to fill their larders. The last of the Tasmanian blacks died more than a quarter of a century ago, but the recollection of the sinister methods by which they were exterminated has not yet passed away.

The train runs past a clear mountain creek on the left side, and the bright water falls in three distinct leaps into its lower course, with clouds of silvery spray sprinkling the tall tree-ferns on its bank. An unknown student of Longfellow has christened it "Laughing-water Creek." Long before the coming of the white men, some dusky Tasmanian Hiawatha dreamed her dreams, doubtless, beside this silvery stream. And now the stream goes on, but the daughter of the forest has been whirled away into oblivion, like the green myrtle leaf that falls upon the surface of the rushing water. It is a stern and terrible doctrine this, that only the strongest shall survive; but its truth is borne in upon us as the little train sweeps on, leaving the Hampshire Plains and Laughing-water Creek nothing but a memory. Where is the race that formerly inhabited these solitudes—ah, where indeed?



Children of the Mist.

THE CHILDREN OF THE MIST.

Through the valleys, softly creeping
'Mid the tree-tops, tempest-tossed,
See the cloud-forms seeking, peeping
For the loved ones that are lost.
Not for storm or sunshine resting,
Will they slacken or desist,
Or grow weary in their questing
For the Children of the Mist.

Where are now those children hiding?
Surely they will soon return,
In the gorge again abiding
'Mid the myrtle and the fern.
Ah! the dusky forms departed
Never more will keep their tryst,
And the clouds, alone, sad-hearted,
Mourn the Children of the Mist.

E'en the wild bush-creatures, scattered,
Ere they die renew their race,
And the pine, by levin shattered,
Leaves an heir to take its place.
Though each forest thing, forth stealing,
Year by year the clouds have kissed,
Vainly are those white arms feeling
For the Children of the Mist.

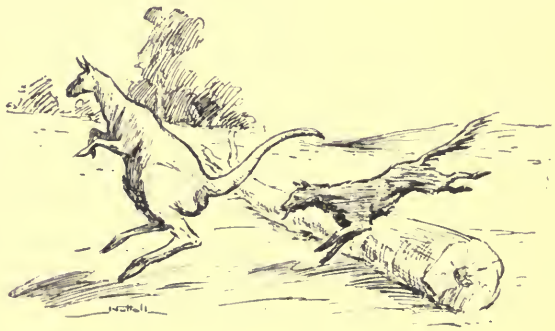
Dead the race, beyond awaking,
Ere its task was well begun:
Human hearts that throbbed to breaking
Are but dust beneath the sun.
Past all dreams of vengeance-wreaking,
Blown where'er the tempests list.
.
But the cloud-forms still are seeking
For the Children of the Mist.

Guildford Junction! There is no time for further reflections, because there are only a few minutes to spare, and, while the engine is taking in water, the prudent passenger should be taking in tea or something else, in the "practicable" refreshment-room. Ten minutes at Guildford is enough to convince one that a few days might be spent there with unalloyed enjoyment, and with immense advantage to the health and spirits. In the first place, it is 2,000 feet above sea level, and the crisp, delicious air that fills the eager lungs makes one realise what Gordon meant when he apostrophised in that ecstatic stanza, "God's glorious oxygen." Then, in the rushing little Hellyer River, half-a-mile away, there are such English trout as the fisherman from across the Straits, accustomed to pulling up the meek flathead and lethargic barracoutta, has never dreamed of. A railway



hand the other day, it seems, caught twenty-two trout, ranging from 2 lb. to 4 lb. each, in an afternoon. The bait to be used is a matter which provokes fierce discussion. Some experts declare for the artificial fly; but the practical fisherman sneers openly at artificial flies, and points triumphantly to a nice basket of fish caught with nothing more scientific than a small green frog, or a common, ordinary grasshopper. There is a fine field for the experimentalist who sets about trout-fishing in the Hellyer. The stream has been well stocked with English fish, and it is astonishing how large they grow in their new surroundings. In the Tasmanian lakes it is not at all unusual to catch gigantic trout up to 20 lb. in weight, and when it is remembered that an ordinarily skilful fisherman can turn a 20-pounder into a 50-pounder by a mere twist of the tongue, it is easy to see the attractiveness of this country from the angler's point of view. Mr. Brown, who keeps the refreshment-room, openly scoffs at fishermen, which is only what might be expected from one who is himself a sportsman of a more romantic kind. He belongs, indeed, to the great fraternity of the fur-hunters, a class beloved by all boys who can delight in the thrilling stories of Mayne Reid and Fennimore Cooper. Mr. Brown's name is not, perhaps, so thrilling as that of those half-forgotten heroes of boyhood's days, who worked for eight hours a day at trapping wild animals, and were horribly tortured by the ruthless Apaches and Comanches after hours. But Mr. Brown is a highly successful hunter, all the same, and he can point, with pardonable pride, to a weatherboard store, nearly filled with the pelts—delightful word, and fragrant with boyhood's memories—of many big grey kangaroos, brown wallabies, and grey or black opossums. These pelts represent a considerable value in sordid cash, apart from their romantic interest, and, in fact, Mr. Brown does very well out of the business. He has three or four real Kangaroo-dogs, who follow him

wherever he goes. Bred from the stag-hound and the grey-hound, they have strength as well as pace. They will hunt by scent as well as by sight, and the biggest kangaroo that hops through the scrub has little chance of escape when once those sharp eyes have sighted him, or those keen noses have snuffed his presence down the wind. A longing comes into the heart to tarry for a little with Mr. Brown, to go seeking black 'possums of gigantic size on moonlight nights, in these vast solitudes, and hunting the "old man" or the flying doe with the big brindled dogs. But all these legitimate aspirations have to be swallowed down hurriedly, together with a final cup of hot tea, and as the train steams out of Guildford the fur-hunter is left alone on the deserted platform. It would save a doctor's bill or two if some hard-worked city men would give up the eternal hunt for money, just for a week, and slip across to Guildford in the kangarooing season.





A Peep at the Pieman.

Beattie, Photo., Hobart

CHAPTER II.

SOME ASPECTS SOME "PROSPECTS," AND A BULL.

"Ecco il toro appare!"
Toreador, attento, Toreador!
—"Carmen."

AT Magnet Junction it becomes necessary to change from the Emu Bay Railway Company's train to the steam tram that runs for ten miles through the heart of the bush to the Magnet Mine. A ride in a tram is a common and prosaic experience in a big city; but here it becomes a positive adventure. The locomotive itself is an unfamiliar creature, with a smoke-stack like a huge inverted extinguisher, and a boiler that visibly moves about on the under-structure. It is provided with a whistle piercing enough for an engine of ten times its size, and its furnace is fed with green timber, that pours out huge clouds of pungent smoke, liberally interspersed with sparks and red hot ashes. There are four trucks, and the passengers take their seats on a bench placed on the truck nearest to the engine, while the guard, arrayed in oilskins and sou'-wester, perches himself on the last truck, in order to devote his best attention to the brakes. The passengers sit with their backs to the engine, so as not to be blinded by the smoke, and then the steam tram screams like a lost soul in agony, and plunges forward on its narrow track. Swinging round the sidling of a mountain, it dashes down the long gradient towards the bottom of the gorge, where the Ritchie Creek is plashing past the spreading tree-ferns, and presently it enters upon a long, straight run, cut through the heavy timber that rises on

either hand. The gums and myrtles spin past the flying trucks so close that one could touch them with an outstretched hand. The smoke that pours from the locomotive's furnace hangs low over the trucks, for steam is shut off, and she is descending by momentum only. The passengers near the front escape the worst of the smoke; but it streams full in the eyes of the guard, as he keeps his place on the side of the last truck, with a keen look out before him, and a firm hand on the brakes. As he sits there, half



seen for a moment through a rift in the driving clouds of smoke, and then obscured altogether until it lifts again, he looks exactly like the steersman of a lifeboat that plunges forward through white-topped seas that gather and burst and part on either side, leaving the helmsman still unharmed. The guard bends his head forward as he crouches down on the truck, and the smoke swings back through the vista of the nar-

row clearing, and spreads itself into all manner of vague and monstrous shapes between the huge trees—many of them 150 feet high—that wall in the track on both sides. When half the journey is covered, the tram, panting and blowing like a cab-horse that has been driven far and fast, draws up on a little wooden viaduct that spans a creek, and is treated to a needful drink from a tank that is filled from a mountain waterfall.

Afterwards there is a long uphill gradient to the Magnet Mine, where the works are in full swing, and the silver-lead ore, dried in a burning, fiery furnace that might have been prepared for Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, is being packed in neat little sacks, ready to be sent to the smelters at Dapto and at Zeehan. These little sacks, stacked so neatly in the big shed, contain a harvest that is reaped all the year round, the harvest of the Magnet hill.

A casual knowledge of the ways and habits of silver-lead ore may be obtained from a brief chat with the hospitable mine manager before it is time to venture upon the apoplectic forest tram again, and rejoin the Emu Bay Company's train at Magnet Junction, en route for Waratah.

At Waratah the traveller is brought face to face with one of the richest tin mines on the face of the globe. There are other rich tin mines certainly. There is one at Pahang, in the Straits Settlements, worked entirely by Chinese. There are others, like the Briseis, and the Brothers' Home, on the east coast of Tasmania, and there are others again in Cornwall, as there were when the Phœnicians went there in their galleys, a few thousand years ago, and caused the British Isles to be called the Cassiterides, or Tin Islands. But in the value of the tin obtained from a single mine, Mount Bischoff is easily first. It is a case of "Eclipse first, and the rest nowhere." And

Mount Bischoff was discovered over thirty years ago by Philosopher Smith.

A strange character was Philosopher Smith. He was a gold-prospector by profession, a "hatter" by predilection, and a bushman by instinct. The prospecting fever had got such a firm grip over him that he would forsake everything else, in order to go forth and look for minerals. He lost all his money, and then he lost his good farm, through his insatiable desire for metal-hunting. He endured hunger, and thirst, and cold, as he struggled through the densest bush in the remotest ranges of north-west Tasmania, accompanied only by his inseparable companion, his dog; and often and often, as a friend who knew him in those days testifies, Philosopher Smith would return to civilisation, famished, and with hardly a rag of clothing remaining on his body. But the "auri sacra fames" never left him.

Then, at last, he set out from the north-west coast, and struggled through range and creek and gully, until he struck the little creek that is now called the Waratah. He climbed the saddle of the moun-





A Vista of the Ring River

Beattie, Photo., Hobart

tain opposite, and camped with his dog upon the summit. And as he examined the summit with a practised glance, his eye fell upon a porphyritic outcrop, which probably made his heart beat faster. Then he picked up a lump of richly mineralised ore, of a kind that was quite strange to him, and having examined it carefully, and made mental notes of the topography, he went back to Wynyard. He took his bit of ore to the blacksmith's furnace, and smelted it in a crucible, getting a button of pure metal from the stone, and then he took the metal to his friend, Mr. Quiggin, for examination. "I think it is tin," said Mr. Quiggin, after a careful inspection. "So do I," responded Philosopher Smith. "Go back and peg out the ground where you found the stuff," said Mr. Quiggin. "I will," said Philosopher Smith; and he forthwith turned round, and, having provided himself with sufficient tucker to sustain life, made his way back through the almost impenetrable bush to the mountain, and pegged out his claim. The place was called Mount Bischoff, after a Russian who was a member of the original survey party; and it is satisfactory to remember that Philosopher Smith did fairly well, in a pecuniary sense, out of his discovery. The lump of ore which he found that day upon the mountain-top was the true Philosopher's Stone, which converted the greater part of the mountain, first into good, useful tin, and then, by the usual metallurgical modification, into pure gold. Up to the year 1902 no fewer than 1,830,000 golden sovereigns were distributed among gratified shareholders in the form of dividends; and it is pleasant to think that a reasonable number of them went into the pockets of Philosopher Smith. The Philosopher is dead now, and his restless spirit is possibly groping round the remoter districts of Paradise in search of novel mineral wealth. But the mountain that he discovered is still being worked, and experts believe that it will be many years yet before its riches are exhausted.

Looking out over the valley of the Waratah through the darkness, the watcher sees dozens of fires glowing, where the concentrating plant is at work extracting black oxide of tin from the loads of material that have been brought in trucks from the open face of the mountain where the stuff was quarried. The roar of the water, as it pours through the jigs, and over the buddles that extend in a long sequence down the valley, is like the sound of the sea upon an ocean beach, and all night long the work continues, and the rich black oxide, containing from 60 to 75 per cent. of pure tin, is falling by its own specific gravity through the water, which carries away the useless debris, and down into the receptacles, from which it is collected in due course and bagged for smelting.

But in the early morning, when the clouds are wrapping the mountain's topmost brow in a soft veil of mist, and all the rest of its vast bulk is bathed in sunlight, the sight is even more impressive. The whole face of the mountain below the saddle has been sliced off, as though by an enormous knife, and everywhere the work of cutting out the ore is going on, without haste, without rest. Now and then, standing afar off, the gazer sees something that looks like a small landslip on the hillside. It is a loaded trolly, sliding down to empty its precious contents into the duodecimo railway trucks that are waiting below to convey the heavy lumps of stone to the crushing battery, and the fine stuff to the concentrating plant.

A mining man, who has spent a long life at the business, gives it as his opinion that Mount Bischoff has very many years of usefulness before it yet. And, fortunately, the price of tin is still high. Copper, when manufactured into bolts or wire or any of the dozens of other forms into which it is worked up, can be used over and over again. Not so tin, which

is used largely for coating other metals. Tin, in most cases, can be used once and once only: and, moreover, its distribution over the earth's surface is far more restricted than that of copper. Herein may be found some, at least, of the reasons which keep the price of tin high, and continually depress the price of copper. As for silver, well, to explain the causes of its fall in value must be left to those who can explain the cause of the depreciation of the rupee, and bi-metallism, and the Silverite Party in the United States, and the cryptic utterance of that eminent populist, Mr. Bryan, who protested, during his last campaign for the Presidential election, that he would not "crucify the world upon a cross of gold."

How delicious is this morning air, on the hills above the little township of Waratah! Soaring up into the clouds, on the west side, are two sharp conical peaks, that would probably be called "The Sisters" if they occurred in Germany, where domestic sentiment so often finds happy expression in the nomenclature of mountains. In the gullies that lie between Mount Bischoff and the twin peaks, are the Ritchie and the Arthur Creeks, and the low ridge of the Magnet Ranges, so lately visited, may be easily recognised.

Clouds gather imperceptibly in these altitudes. Unexpected, unobserved, unreckoned with, they appear, as quietly as the genii in the fables, and while the onlooker is actually gazing, rapt in admiration, at the gracious gleam of sunshine on a distant peak, he becomes aware of rolling mist-wreaths, that have filled the valley, hidden the myrtle, and also the gums that rise above the myrtle belts, and crept up as ruthlessly as the incoming tide "along the sands o' Dee," until they have blotted out the very tendrils of the Macquarie vine that binds the face of the cliff beneath his feet. The valley is full of mist, there is a fine

rain falling, and no more beautiful landscapes will be on view for the present. It is time to go back to Waratah.

Walking down the hillside towards the township, the traveller puts up a big flight of black jays, with white tips on tail and wings. In a country where birds of every kind are scarce, these black jays are very welcome. A few parrots here and there, and some black cockatoos whirring past us high up in the treetops, are the only birds that have hitherto shown themselves. The flights of black jays give the touch of life that this sombre Tasmanian bush so sadly needs. They are the dustmen of the prospectors' and surveyors' camps, and the energy with which they clear away all waste matter from the temporary resting-places of these pioneers should earn a vote of thanks from the nearest board of public health.

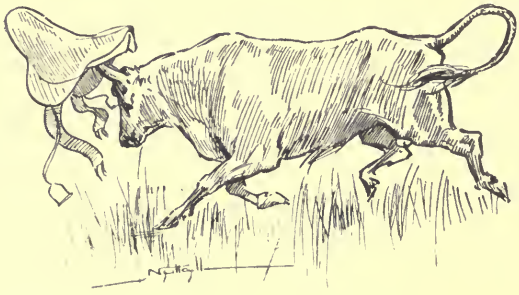
The blue smoke curling from the chimney of a miner's cottage in the valley is a delightful little touch of home, and it seems to add, in some mysterious fashion, to the stability of this mining township. Blue smoke, curling from a cottage roof, strikes a chord in the sympathetic heart to-day as it did in Calypso's Isle so long ago.

Yonder in the valley, below Mount Bischoff is the sight that Ulysses, smitten with sudden homesickness, desired so yearningly to see, "where clear-seen Ithaca leaned upon the main," nigh three thousand years ago. Good-bye, Sweet Waratah!

The wild cattle on the land that extends from Guildford to the Pieman River, are few in number, but they make up in ferocity what they lack in numbers. As the train traverses the Hadfield Plains, a small mob of wild cattle may be seen in the distance, through the scanty timber. They have the appearance of degenerate Herefords that have been subjected

to a policy of drastic retrenchment. They can live, but they can never grow fat on this coarse native grass. Still, they have their liberty, and that, for them, is no doubt most enjoyable. These dark-red cattle that give the human race such a wide berth, are not alone in their self-exile, for an exciting story is current that has, as its leading incident, the strange behaviour of a cream-coloured bull that was lost by his owner somewhere in this district many months ago. Terrified bushmen had come in at intervals, and reported having met a bull, sixteen hands high, and trained to the hour. The furious animal was faster than many horses, and was equally good on the flat or over fences. Combined with a fine dash of speed in a short flutter, he had great staying power, and very few ordinary horses could get away from him. It seems that this unusual animal, in the course of one of his solitary training gallops far inland on the Hampshire Plains, happened to catch sight of a misguided stockman, who had come to look for lost cattle. The stockman soon decided to go for a complete change of air and scene; but, unfortunately, the bull made the same determination at the same time. Horse and bull got quickly away together, and a most interesting race—for the stockman—followed. For a time the old stockhorse seemed to hold his own, but the superior condition of the bull, who was trained very fine, and had not a superfluous ounce of flesh on his carcase, soon told its inevitable tale, and the gap between the leader and his next attendant was quickly decreased. Gradually the bull improved his position until his horns were level with his opponent's tail. Then he made his run, and forged ahead until his horns were abreast of the horse's girths, and the stockman's teeth were chattering. At this point the bull deliberately bored in upon his opponent, and so thoroughly did he carry out this manœuvre that he knocked the old stockhorse over altogether, and charged and butted that

unfortunate animal, with the most disastrous results. The stockman was only saved from a similar fate by the fact that the bull became entangled in the girths, and as the active young Tasmanian ran for his life to the nearest timber, he saw a gaunt and hungry bull galloping furiously into the bluest distance, with a valuable stock-saddle firmly impaled on the points of its short and businesslike horns.





The Falls of the Hadfield. *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

CHAPTER III.

OFF TO SILVERLAND.

"The swimming vapour slopes athwart the glen,
Puts forth an arm, and creeps from pine to pine,
And loiters, slowly drawn."

—Tennyson.

THE train sweeps on through mighty cuttings, blasted out of solid conglomerate or schist, and skims round the ranges on sidlings. Five hundred feet below the level of the line the Hadfield River lashes itself into foam as it races over snags and boulders, in a vain attempt to keep up with the train, and the Hadfield Gorge, in which the sun never shines, looms up from its lonely depths, tenanted only by the wild laurel and the tree-fern. Far away to the left rises the snow-covered crown of Barn Bluff, with the sun shining on its level plateau, that looks as though it had been squared by some Cyclopean carpenter. Barn Bluff is 4,000 feet high, or thereabouts, and it makes the interminable succession of less lofty ranges appear quite insignificant by comparison. Looking back from the snow-capped mountain on the sky line to the gorges at his feet, the traveller finds himself gazing down, on one side of the line, into the Hadfield Gorge, and on the other into the gorge of the Que River, marvelling much at the engineering difficulties which have been met and vanquished in the construction of this portion of the permanent way. Yonder is the old pack-track, three feet wide, and paved with "corduroy," that had to be laid down

by the constructing engineer before a single sleeper or yard of rail could be laid on the permanent way. No general advancing into hostile country needs to be more careful to keep open his line of communication with his supply base than a constructing engineer, with such a railway as this on hand. There were no Government roads, or any other kind of roads, that could be utilised, and every bite of bread and meat for 1,500 men, as well as all other necessary stores, had to be brought by packhorse from the nearest base. The pack-tracks cost thousands of pounds for maintenance alone and at last, with the light of much experience to guide him, the engineer converted the pack-tracks into tram-tracks, by laying down rough wooden rails, upon which trucks could be drawn by horses. The remains of these tram-tracks, winding round the mountain sides, descending into gullies, and climbing up the opposite sides again, crawling through solid masses of dense undergrowth, and always coming back to the side of the railway, may still be seen by travellers, though wind and rain have wrought sad havoc in their solidity.

The names of some of these Tasmanian beauty-spots seem to have been applied to them without due reflection. What, for instance, would any fair-minded person suppose to be the name of this lovely stream that ripples along, hiding itself modestly in raiment of rich greenery, from the inquisitive sunshine, and crooning to itself with the sweet inarticulate sounds of innocent infancy? Surely those who had the privilege of naming this beautiful rivulet would naturally confer upon it a name which would recall tender and romantic associations, and which would worthily reflect the spirit of the scene which it so well adorns. Did they call it the Bendemeer? No, they did not. They called it the Boko Creek. Boko is an expression that is not to be found in any well-regulated

dictionary. It is not even included in the late Professor Morris' "Dictionary of Australasian English," and the inquirer into the significance of the word may possibly conjecture that it is not used by any standard authors, and belongs, rather, to that language which is spoken, but not written, except occasionally, on a slip of paper that is handed up to the bench in the police court for their worships emphatic disapproval.

Boko, if memory does not play tricks, is a word often used by uneducated persons as a synonym for nose, a threat to "dot" an adversary on the "boko" being, in fact, a direct menace to commit a breach of the peace by hitting somebody on the nose. What a name to give to a sweet little stream like this, with its waterfall that drops thirty feet, sprinkling "the iris of the Australasian spray," to borrow Mr. William Watson's picturesque phrase, over the intrusive fronds of the tree-ferns that bend above its banks! One imagines that there must be some other meaning for this word. And there is. Listen:—

THE CHRISTENING OF BOKO CREEK.

"There came a skilled surveyor from the distant
Queensland plains,
To measure up these wild Tasmanian hills;
And the further that he travelled with his little
pegs and chains—
Well, the louder grew his grumbling at his ills.
His beard was like the dogwood scrub, his teeth
were like the snags
Where far below in foam the river broke, O;
His coat hung round like shredded bark—so also
did his bags,
Before he reached the spot now called the Boko.

"It happened that in brighter days this survey man had strayed
Far, far away, among the Myall blacks,
And learned to love their lingo, though the noises that they made
Were mostly like the grinding of an axe.
One day there came a jackeroo, with eye-glass in his eye;
The blacks drew near, and jabbered, 'con fuoco.'
They thought he was a one-eyed man, and raised a frightened cry,
'Heya, mine tinkit now dat pfeller boko.'

"The vagrant years went moving on, some ran, some walked, some crept,
For Time, the great Policeman, grants no rest.
But still that skilled surveyor man, with dogwood whiskers, kept
The native word for 'one-eyed' in his breast;
And as, while naming each new spot, according to his freak,
He jolted onward, on a ballast loco.,
And came upon the lonely charm of yon sequestered creek,
'This one-eyed place,' he yelled, 'I'll call the Boko.'"

Just below the waterfall is "the 24-mile"—and luncheon. The fettler's wife at "the 24-mile," is a hospitable, bright-faced young woman, who lays a white cloth, and makes tea in a tea-pot with marvellous promptitude. She disliked "the Que," where she last resided owing to the exigencies of the line in that locality; but she is very happy at the Boko, to which her husband has been transferred, with the other three members of his gang. She cannot understand why her next-door neighbour is always grumbling at the loneliness of the place, and wishing herself back again in the West. As for herself, she finds the

children good company, and the place is very healthy, though a trifle cold in winter. One learns, incidentally, that the young woman is the daughter of a fettler, and accustomed from infancy to the strange loneliness of the nomadic life, in ever-changing habitations along the line. She has three children—Floss, Apricot, and the baby, each of whom is a distinct little character-type. Floss is a pretty, six-year-old blonde, and moderately conversational; Apricot is a beautiful five-year-old brunette, who speaks never a word, and the baby's age and sex are matters upon which it would be dangerous to hazard an opinion. Like the ancient Spartans, it was clothed in a single garment, and, like the victims of Dr. Wackford Squeers, it had obviously been eating treacle. Floss, whose education is imparted to her by her father after tea every evening, as there is no school nearer than twenty miles or so away, volubly undertakes to spell cat or dog, without being pressed; but Apricot, into whose small soul the silence of the bush has entered, disregards the talkative visitors completely, and though you take her small, plump hand in yours, and implore her to speak, if it is only a word, she continues to stare straight before her, with her big blue eyes fixed inalterably upon the cheery log-fire. Apricot is thinking, and "the thoughts of youth are



long, long thoughts." Perhaps she is thinking that she, too, like her mother before her, will grow up to be a fettler's wife, and the happy, cheery mother of many future little line-repairers.

As the train steams out from the hospitable fettler's home—the fettler himself being away inspecting a suspicious dog-spike down the line—the baby is discerned clambering over a huge boulder towards the creek, Floss is inside the little house, evidently helping to clear away the tea things, and Apricot the beautiful is gazing after the retreating train, still wrapped in her reflections.

Running down on an easy gradient, we open up the Pieman River, compared with which all the Tasmanian rivers hitherto met with "are as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine. Not unlike wine, either, looks the curiously named Pieman, as it pours along, frothing and sparkling like champagne in the gorge below, and Tennyson's famous line in "Locksley Hall" seems to gain an additional significance. So far as the kindly bounty of Nature is concerned, this part of the island might stand for the model from which the late Laureate drew his picture of the lotus-eaters' Isle. It is, indeed,

> "A land of streams.
> Some, like a downward smoke,
> Slow dropping veils of thinnest lawn, did go.
> And some through wavering lights and shadows broke,
> Rolling a slumbrous sheet of foam below."

But it is to be feared that the poet's complacent attitude of lofty scorn for common industries, and particularly his contempt for mine-owners, would have received a rude shock had he been able to foresee the rise and progress of the Mount Bischoffs and Mount Zeehans and Mount Lyells, that were un-

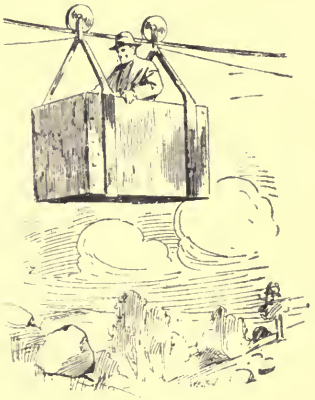


The Pieman from the Railway Bridge. *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

dreamed of in those early days, when he was singing so sweetly of Maud, with her feet "like sunny gems on an English sward," and of that much-to-be-detested person who developed a coal mine on his property, and was promptly stigmatised as "master of half a gutted shire."

The Pieman River itself is worthy of the highest encomiums that could be lavished upon it, and as the student of natural beauty looks at the dark and foaming current that winds along under the shadows of the gigantic trees that clothe its banks on either side, the imagination reels under a blow to find that this unromantic name of Pieman was bestowed upon it from the gloomy circumstance that a convict known as Tom the Pieman, who had escaped from Sarah Island, in Macquarie Harbour, was recaptured by his pursuers on the bank of this river, which he was unable to cross. The river is now spanned by a light, strong steel girder bridge, over which the railway line is laid; but it is a comparatively new structure, and a few years ago, when Lord and Lady Brassey were making a pleasure-tour through this part of Tasmania, there was no bridge at all at this point. A cage, travelling on a wire hawser, was the only available means of crossing, and, one by one, the vice-regal party, like shipwrecked passengers from a foundering vessel, were drawn across the yawning gulf to safety. Rightly or wrongly, Lord Brassey, while he was Governor of Victoria, earned a reputation for falling off quite a number of different means of transit, and he descended with more haste than premeditation from his bicycle, his horse, and, finally, his yacht, in rapid succession. Knowing this tendency on his part, the watchers across the river kept their eyes fixed upon him with painful anxiety during the passage, but though the wire rope sagged ominously in the middle when the representative of the Sovereign was suspended in mid-air high above

the roaring torrent, the crossing plant was equal to the task, and Lord Brassey managed, under Providence, to retain his seat in the wobbly little cage.



People who admire deep cuttings, cunningly constructed sidlings, and elegant steel bridges, can gratify their passion to the full by a trip on this line to Zeehan. There is even a tunnel a quarter of a mile long, to complete the inventory of engineering attractions, and, best of all, the line is solid and safe, and the trains run with the perfection of smoothness. Mr. James Stirling, who built the line for the Company, and who now manages it, was once an officer of the Victorian Railways, and he learned his business as a railway constructor in many different parts of Australia. To the man who built the Pine Creek to Palmerston line, in the torrid region of Northern Australia, and who had 6,000 Chinese navvies and 1,000 whites under him for the job, there were no difficulties that could not be surmounted in the construction of this line from Guildford Junction to Zeehan. The line built by Mr. Stirling is, indeed,

a solid monument to the indomitable resolution, and the great organising and administrative capacity, as well as the engineering knowledge and resourcefulness of the constructor.

It is getting dark, and the evening is closing in fast, or otherwise one would be admiring the panorama of gorge and forest, stream and mountain, that moves continually past the carriage window.

Ah, here we are. Zeehan at last!

There was once, not many years ago, a young gentleman who travelled from London to Port Melbourne on a mail steamer, and who attired himself, as soon as he reached Hobson's Bay, in a red shirt, corduroy riding breeches, and ferocious boots, under the impression that he was about to land in a place where that was the customary costume, and where his peculiar clothing would attract no attention. It required a friendly hint from his alarmed cabin steward to correct his erroneous impression, and common gratitude probably compelled him to disburse an extra half-sovereign as a thank-offering for being rescued from an unenviable position.

If the same young gentleman had been bound for Zeehan, instead of Melbourne, he would naturally, relying upon Bret Harte's descriptions of the fashions in vogue at Poker Flat and Roaring Camp, have added to his Melbourne costume a belt containing a bowie and a brace of shooting irons. But, alas! he would find that the picturesque attire of old-time miners has passed away, and that their camps have become respectable, not to say luxurious. The average resident of Zeehan may wear a "bluey" and a stout pair of leggings over the prosaic details of his unromantic suit of tweed, but he invariably discards even these accessories indoors, and he usually so far forgets what is due to the romance of mining as to wash his hands before dinner. There may be room for

grumbling at the fall in the price of silver-lead, which causes the stream of commerce in Zeehan to flow with a slight diminution of its former exuberant velocity; but the traveller can still be sure of comfortable quarters and also of finding plenty to interest him, as he takes his walks abroad.

Horticulturists were recently notified through the press that a monster mushroom had been gathered at Northwood, England. It weighed 2 lb. 2 oz., measured 39 in. in circumference, and grew in three days. The township of Zeehan strikes the reflective visitor as bearing an astonishing resemblance to that portentous vegetable. It weighs very heavily on the chests of certain rash speculators, it measures several miles in circumference, and it grew in about six years out of nothing. Moreover, it has trams running up and down the main street, an enlightened daily press, several churches, and more than several hotels, not to mention a theatre, streets full of shops, and most of the other luxuries of civilisation. Also, there are a number of silver-lead mines in the immediate neighbourhood, and new ones are being opened up, or old ones re-opened, almost every week. When the mining field was first pegged out, the Government made a slight mistake, which has resulted in some disappointment. They yielded to the demand of certain persons that they should be allowed to build houses on the mining area, and the consequence was that the main street of Zeehan now runs over one of the richest portions of the field. In fact, when one of the numerous hotels was being erected, the workmen had to excavate a large quantity of high-grade ore before the posts upon which the place was built, instead of foundations, could be securely driven. The bar of ore is not in it, on a new mining township, with the bar of an hotel as a rapid wealth-producer; but as the whole township has been built literally, as well as figuratively, upon the precious

metal, the outlying deposits available for mining operations have in some instances not come up to expectations. At the same time, several mines, notably the Montana and the Argent, are getting good, payable ore, and dividends are accruing with quiet and unobtrusive persistence.

With silver at a shade under 2s. per oz., and lead hovering about in the region of only £10 per ton, an investor cannot hope to grow into a millionaire in a week; but, to borrow the hackneyed phrase which is more usually applied to the investor's wife than to himself, he is "doing as well as can be expected."

A ride out to Mount Heemskirk results in the discovery of many excited people, who are confident that in the deposit of tin which they have found there they have secured another Mount Bischoff. So mote it be.

The mine on Mount Zeehan itself is not now working. A mantle of snow, new-fallen during the night, covers the top of the mountain and also the summit of Mount Dundas, further in the distance. Under a grey sky the township of Zeehan, completely surrounded by a great amphitheatre of hills, is silent on this quiet Sunday afternoon, resting after the strenuous labour of the week. The working of a big 12-inch pump on the Montana throbs like a mighty pulse through the stillness, and the listening ear can catch the plash of water through the concentrators at the Argent. But these sounds only intensify the general stillness, and, high above the town that bears its name, stands snowy-helmeted Mount Zeehan, like a vigilant sentry, keeping guard above this well-filled treasure-house.

CHAPTER IV.

DARK SHADOWS—AND THEN THE SUNSHINE.

"Man's inhumanity to man makes countless thousands mourn."—Burns.

THE next slide in the cinematographe of travel reveals Strahan and Macquarie Harbour, haunted by fearful memories. Strahan is only two hours' journey from Zeehan by the Government railway. Visitors will find no lack of hotel accommodation here. The first sight of this vast sheet of dark water, edged near its outlet by mighty terraces of rock, bare of all vegetation, awakens an emotion, almost of horror. Where is the spot in all the length and breadth of blood-stained Europe that carries such terrible memorials of man's inhumanity to man as this land-locked harbour, dotted sparsely with small islands here and there, and girt by gigantic prison walls of frowning basalt.

Could an oubliette in the Bastille compare for horror with one of these terrible cells that are still to be seen on Settlement Island? Think you that Ponnivard, chained to his pillar in the lowest dungeon of wave-lashed Chillon, could be likened in misery to one of those unnamed creatures who were fastened to the iron rings that still remain in the cave of Condemned Island, where the prisoner was left to be tamed—or maddened—by the icy waters of the rising tide. Eighty years of progress and civilisation have

not obliterated the traces of the lash and the chain-gang on yonder little wooded island, and the bitter memories are burnt into the history of this place as indelibly as the marks of the cat and the leg-iron—still visible in the flesh of one or two shuffling "old hands" that yet survive.

The historical facts connected with Macquarie Harbour cannot be forgotten, for they have been woven into the one great tragical romance that has yet been produced by an Australian writer, but after a brief and hurried survey they may well be quietly laid aside by those who come to this place to rejoice in the gifts of Nature rather than to be sad at the thought of the shameful way in which man has befouled her handiwork. The holiday-maker, however, who comes to Macquarie Harbour would do well to refresh his memory by re-reading Marcus Clarke's sombre and haunting story, in order to be able to identify the scenes in which the action of the plot is carried on.

Away on the opposite side of the harbour from Strahan the cliffs which form the coast line run out into a long point of rock, bare of all vegetation. This is Liberty Point, which escaping prisoners usually made for, under the belief that it marked the



entrance to the harbour, only to find that before them lay a long succession of still more arduous ridges. Next to Liberty Point is Bald Head, and opposite Bald Head is Betsy Island. Local tradition says that it was here that Rufus Dawes, after being isolated with Mrs. Vickers and Sylvia and Maurice Frere, used to swim out daily from the mainland to capture the goats, and use their skins to make the "coracle."

The passage from the mainland to the island is only a few hundred yards in length, and at the present time nearly half the distance may be accomplished by wading, so that the task was not at all an impossible one.

Everywhere one can note evidences of the close topographical study that Marcus Clarke must have made of the harbour before he sat down to write his book; and, however painful the subject may be, there is a sombre interest in picking out the different notorious spots that are described in the novel.

The traveller in Europe, as he journeys where

> "The castled crag of Drachenfels
> Frowns o'er the wide and winding Rhine,"

finds a keener pleasure in the scene as he remembers the cantos which record the pilgrimage of Childe Harold on the same storied and romantic river. Should he find his way, afterwards, from Geneva up to Montreux by the blue waters of the "Lake Leman" that Byron loved, he will visit, with a warmer interest, the grey old castle that is built on a rock in the lake, under the shadow of the frowning Col du Jaman, as he remembers the lines in "The Prisoner of Chillon," and sees the author's name rudely cut in the pillar of the dungeon. So, also, in going over Macquarie Harbour, one cannot see the different spots which have become identified with that other semi-historical prisoner, without thinking of the Australian



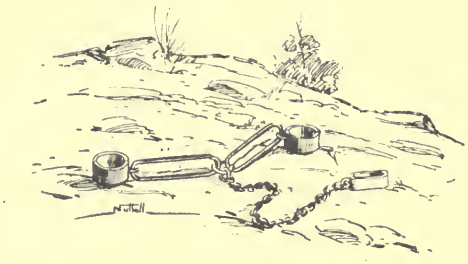
The Convict Settlement in 1830. *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

writer who has made the sombre theme his own. Yonder is Sarah Island—it is called Settlement Island now—where Rufus Dawes bore his sufferings with such unwavering fortitude. In the cliff at Bald Head there is a cave, which is called Dawes Cave, and which tradition has actually assigned as the place of shelter of the castaways during the time that the famous "coracle" was building. Just beyond Sarah Island is Condemned Island, a mere rock, with a cave on the further side, and on the mainland opposite is Coal Head, to which the prisoner swam from Condemned Island in his irons. Does anyone now say, looking at the broad expanse of water that separates the lonely rock from the mainland, that such a feat was impossible?

A recent discovery has justified the introduction of the incident most remarkably. Five years ago a party of prospectors were exploring Mount Darwin, that towers up yonder behind Coal Head, in search of gold. They had found good gold in the lower gullies, and, after the manner of prospectors, they had climbed to the summit, in order to see if the denudation by wind and weather had uncovered the outcrop of a reef. They did not find the reef, but they did find, on the very top of the mountain, a rusty leg-iron, the grim relic of the former days under "the system."

Who can tell the fate of the man who once climbed, with irons on his legs, up to the top of this mountain, rich in gold, and, reaching the summit, managed at last to knock the hateful emblem of his servitude from his body? Who can tell with what a thrill of hope renewed he must have looked across the water to the little hell on earth that he had left behind him? And who shall describe the awful sense of utter abandonment as he staggered on, deeper and deeper, into the loneliest gulfs of those unimagined solitudes, to die

at last of famine and despair, with the wild-cat staring at him through the timber, and the hyena—that bushmen now call the Tasmanian tiger—howling ominously near. Yet all this is told plainly enough by those links of iron found upon the mountain-top.



There are other relics that bring home to the spectator with irresistible vividness the reality of the convict days. An old brick-kiln was found, some time ago, on the western shore of the harbour, and was easily identified as the place where the prisoners—working like the captive Israelites of old for their Egyptian masters—put out their daily tale of bricks. A gum-tree, defying "the system" has scornfully pushed its trunk up and through the brickwork of the kiln; but the ruins are still in excellent preservation. Here the prisoners moulded the bricks that were used in building the cells, the court-house, and the officers' quarters on the island. To assist the task of tallying the required number, the brickmakers were accustomed to indent every tenth brick on its upper surface with both their thumbs, so that the warder could count the output almost at a glance. The bricks so indented were used with the others for building operations on the island, and a few years ago, when the great mining activity in the north-west of Tasmania had caused a strong demand for building material, to be used in the different mining

townships, many enterprising speculators obtained boats, and sailed away to the old convict settlement, in quest of bricks. They destroyed and carried off a quantity of the old brickwork before the Government, learning what was going on, stepped in and stopped the depredations.

Among the bricks so carried off were many of those that were thumb-marked by the convict makers seventy years ago, and the marks may still be seen on them as fresh as the day that they were made.

The pattern of the fine lines on each convict's thumb, and the deeper, broader line at the base of the first joint, are delineated with photographic sharpness. Every thumb-mark differs from every other, and each is the vivid record of an individuality that has passed away. These thumb-marked bricks may still be seen on the island, by making diligent search, though a great number have been carried away as curios. Some of them present special marks, by which their owners, if still alive, could easily be identified. Here is one, for instance, in which the convict's thumb had been split longitudinally, and had healed, with a deep cicatrix, which is plainly stamped on the enduring surface of the red-brown clay. To look at it is to be reminded, with distressing vividness, of the brickmaker. One almost expects to see the owner of that scarred thumb looking over one's shoulder, with his close-cropped hair and desperate eyes, as one examines his handiwork.

On a few of the bricks, also, the makers have written their monograms, while the clay was still wet, and the initials stand out to-day with absolute distinctness. Here is one with "T.P." inscribed on it, in the centre of a dainty arabesque of scroll-work. Who was T.P., and what was the story of his ill-starred life? None can say; but his signature is in-

delible on this bit of well-fired clay, and may last as long as any of those inscriptions of the times of Amurath and Rameses, that the archæologists from time to time dig up on tiles of pottery, and learnedly decipher.

The initialled bricks are getting very rare now. Some of them have been built into houses at Strahan and at Zeehan. Others have been carried off by curio-hunters, and soon not one will be left to bring before the wandering stranger—what? The very handwriting of the damned.

Settlement Island has lately been leased by the Government to an unimaginative person, who saw in it an admirable position for a poultry farm. A caretaker and his wife now live on the island, practical people who see no ghosts on stormy nights, and who do not hear the screams of the victims at the triangle mingling with the howling of the wind. And cocks and hens now wander at will where man, made in the image of God, once stared in agony through the gloom of a six-foot cell. The inquisitive stranger who lands on the island may see, in almost every cell, marks on the walls where the wretched men who were condemned to solitary confinement have kicked a foothold in the bricks, so that they could scramble up and stare for a few seconds through the ventilating grater near the ceiling—into a passage flanked by more cells on the other side. Only a few ruined remains of the old buildings still survive to cast their dark shadow over waters where happy-holiday-makers now sail, with song and laughter.

The snow-topped peak of Frenchman's Cap, far inland,

> "Stands up like topmost Gargarus,
> And takes the morning."



The Ruined Prison House on Sarah Island. *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

As the sunshine broadens on the snow, far up in those stainless heights, and the shadow still broods over the low island set in the dark, peaty waters of the harbour, one recalls the pithy lines of the poet, who wrote, with a significance which is redoubled here:

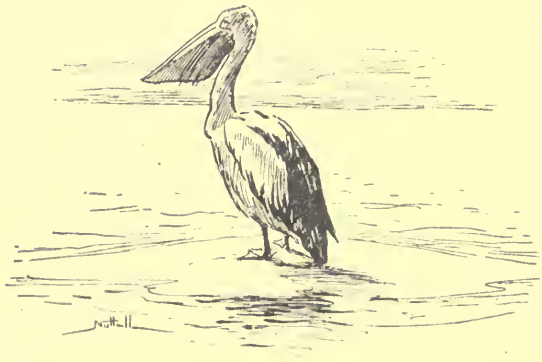
"En haut la cime,
En bas l'abime;
En haut mystere,
En bas misere."

From "penseroso" to "allegro" is, after all, only a single step. When the sunshine is on Macquarie Harbour it is no unworthy rival, even of Hobart, though its beauties are of a haughtier and more majestic kind, at any rate, to that hackneyed individual, the casual observer. The hills and cliffs on the western side, with their steep, bare sides, and their straight plateau summits, have an unfortunate resemblance, it is true, to walls: but on the east side of the bay the mountains have been moulded into true Alpine grandeur. Here is Mount Darwin, scored deeply by primeval glaciers that have cut away great slices from the side nearest to the harbour, and fretted by the narrow courses of many mountain torrents. And, far away, seen above the intervening peaks, is the snowy crown of Mount Owen in the heart of the copper country. It was a fine thought of Mr. Charles Gould, a former Tasmanian Government geologist, to name the mountains in this north-west district after great scientists. Hence we have Mount Darwin, Mount Jukes, Mount Huxley, Mount Owen, Mount Lyell, Mount Sedgwick, and Mount Tyndall, all towering aloft in awesome grandeur.

What a delightful yachting cruise could be organised in Macquarie Harbour—if there were any yachts. In default of yachts, the tourist must put up with the Union Company's launches, which, if less picturesque,

are, to tell the truth, far more comfortable than the average yacht, with its smelly cabin, and exasperating slowness. If people in Australia, or even in countries more distant still, only knew the delight of a cruise on a launch in Macquarie Harbour, they would hardly miss the chance of coming here and watching the sun gilding the tops of the myrtle and manuka trees, and the black swans that "Banjo" Paterson has sung about, clanging off to their homes, far up the Gordon River. There are pelicans to be seen, also, near Macquarie Heads; lonely-looking creatures, whose immense beaks, like the nose of Cyrano de Bergerac, seem a source of perpetual disquietude to their possessors, and there are trumpeter and sea-trout to be hauled up by anyone who has energy to drop a line overboard.

The wild swan makes a dainty dish, and may be shot without difficulty as yet, though an experienced boatman deplores the tendency on the part of sportsmen to "roust" these birds about unduly. They have already been "rousted" out of Swan Bay, where they were formerly to be found very thickly, and they have now emigrated to the mouth of the



Gordon River, and the upper and less frequented parts of the harbour.

"Where the pelican builds her nest" is a poetic conundrum that is usually solved by the answer, "Out back;" and whether the long-beaked creatures condescend to build any nests near the sand-ridges flanking Hell's Gates, where they may be often seen, cannot be predicated with certainty; but the swans have certainly been nesting near this harbour since before the coming of the white man. They were there in 1813, when Captain Kelly, sailing round from Hobart on a voyage of adventure, discovered the narrow entrance, masked by a sand-bar outside, and, running through the passage, found himself in the vast landlocked harbour which, a few years afterwards, acquired such sinister notoriety. Captain Kelly named the harbour after the Governor of New South Wales, and he called the bay which he discovered on the south-east side by his own name.

Men and institutions have come and gone since that eventful day, but still the black swans haunt the harbour for food, slow to relinquish their immemorial hunting-ground. The explorer went his way and was seen no more, the convicts lived and toiled and died, until at last the settlement was broken up. Then came the prospector and railway navvy. Tasmania itself, which was at first an appanage of lordly New South Wales, became, in 1825, a separate Crown colony, and afterwards a full-fledged colony, with responsible government. Last of all she became a State in the Commonwealth of Australia. And the black swans have seen all these men and systems come and go, and still they soar, winging their flight at evening up the valley of the Gordon, and leaving men and systems far below them. But they are getting gradually scarcer, and in a few years, if the guns that have already exterminated the native human race of Tasmania are used with the same deadly in-

sistence against the black swans, these, too, will probably be utterly destroyed, and will share the fate of all the steadily diminishing Tasmanian fauna. A voyage up the magnificent Gordon River, which debouches into the harbour near the southern end, will bring to view the haunts and hiding-places of these beautiful creatures, and will also enable the traveller to revel in river scenes such as exist in no other part of Tasmania.



The landscape artist, the enthusiastic fisherman, the historical explorer in quest of grim old relics of the past, and the mere tourist and picnicker may all spend a few delightful days profitably and pleasurably on the waters of this broad-bosomed harbour, where, at the seaward end, the face of Nature scowls with the darkest passions, but where, far up towards the inmost shore, she smiles with exquisite tenderness. The change in the character of the scenery is most marked. As far as Liberty Point the harbour is a veritable prison, castellated, ramparted, frowning, and impregnable. Then begin green, wooded slopes, and fairy coves and isles, with here and there a broadening inward curve of the shore-line, or a river rippling over a sandy



"Hell's Gates." The Entrance to Macquarie Harbor *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

bar. The narrow entrance to the narbour from the sea has been aptly named "Hell's Gates," and the topmasts of a sunken schooner stand up forlornly among the breakers on the bar, like the visible embodiment of the spirit of desolation in this harbour of wrecked hopes and foundered lives. Upon the gloomy face of the cliff that stands opposite to Entrance Island might well have been written, eighty years ago, the dread inscription that Dante, with the strong visualising imagination of a dramatic poet, saw above the portal of his Inferno.

"Lasciate ogni speranza, che voi entrate."

But up towards the landward end of the harbour, where the Gordon River, veiled in the beauty of tinted myrtle and flowering undergrowth, glides down to mingle with these ill-starred waters, there comes through the plash of the oars an echo of another poet's "brief thanksgiving":—

"That no life lives for ever,
That dead men rise up never,
That even the weariest river
Winds somewhere safe to sea."

While boating on Macquarie Harbour, it is well to take due precaution, for even in comparatively recent times the wind that howls down through the clefts between the mountains has stirred up the spirit of destruction here, and brought about terrible tragedies. A few years ago a young Englishman named Richardson paid a visit to Macquarie Harbour, in order to collect materials for the writing of a book upon the old convict system. He hired a boat and rowed out, with five men, to Settlement Island; but as he was absorbed in his work of investigation, the clouds were gathering, and on the return journey to Old Strahan, the storm fell upon the harbour with awful ferocity, and the boat half filled

and then capsized. The young author was unable to maintain his hold on the upturned keel, and sank at once, drowned in those waters whose dark story he had come so far to learn. With him went three of his companions. A young sailor named Lloyd, and a boatman who was an Irishman, alone managed to keep hold of the capsized boat; but their chances were desperate, for they were far from the shore, and boats in those days were few and far between. Hours went by without a sign of succour. The sun beat down upon the two men, and then sank below the horizon. The next day broke, and the dawn saw the two men still clinging to the upturned boat, chilled by the icy water, and weakened by the terrible strain, but still enduring. Then the Irishman went mad, and screamed with maniacal rage at his companion in misery. Lloyd drew his sheath-knife from his waistbelt, and drove the blade through the planking that formed the bottom of the boat, so as to get a holdfast for emergencies. The hours went by, and at last the Irishman, with one awful yell, slipped from the boat and disappeared.



Lloyd was left alone, hanging on to the haft of the knife that he had driven through the timber. His hand slipped down from the haft to the blade, which

cut through the sinews of his palm, and after that he lost consciousness. He remembered no more until he found himself on the shore of the harbour, having been, as he calculated, for thirty hours clinging to the boat. He staggered along the shore until he came to the King River, down which big logs floated at intervals, and at last he managed to float across the stream on one of them. Half delirious from exposure and starvation, he tottered on in the direction of the little township of Old Strahan, and was finally found by a settler, at whose hut he obtained rest and nourishment. This sole survivor of an almost forgotten tragedy is now the master of the steam-dredge used in clearing away the perpetual accretions of sand at the entrance of the harbour.

It often rains at Macquarie Harbour, and after the rain comes the rainbow. In fact, the whole of this north-west district of Tasmania might well be called the Land of Rainbows, for hardly a day passes that does not bring half a dozen of them, and sometimes two or three at once. A rainbow at Hell's Gates, with its gorgeous colours descending upon the foaming water on the bar, and the dominating violet, green, and orange bands reflected in a broad belt that comes straight through the narrow entrance, and along the dark surface of the harbour, till it touches the sides of the little rocking launch, compels thoughts of its significance.



CHAPTER V.

THROUGH THE COPPER COUNTRY.

"Week in, week out, from morn till night,
You may hear his bellows blow."
—"The Village Blacksmith."

OF course the gold-seekers have been at work in the beds of nearly all the creeks and rivers that empty themselves into Macquarie Harbour. More than a quarter of a century ago prospectors had penetrated to these lonely gorges, and had worked their way up the King River, and the contiguous gullies, for many miles.

But gold was never very plentiful, and the dish and cradle of the fossicker have been replaced by enormous copper-smelting furnaces, which pour out the real mineral wealth of the country in a continuous molten stream. A delightful trip to the copper country begins at Regatta Point, on Macquarie Harbour, the terminus of the Mount Lyell Railway. The line runs, at first, up the valley of the King River to Teepookana, once a great depot of the gold-diggers further inland, and the point from which their boats, with provisions and stores, used to start for the mining camps.

Teepookana, the name in the lost Tasmanian dialect for the kingfisher, was not the indigenous name of the place, but was given to it long after the last of the blacks had vanished, by some white antiquary, who decided to preserve the liquid syllables of the lost language, for picturesque reasons, although the people



A Glimpse of the King River. *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

who once used the word had disappeared. A strange atonement, surely, by a peaceable philologist for the blotting out of a human family!

Several of these soft, musical Tasmanian names are to be met with in this part of the country. Here, for instance, is "Rinadena," on the crest of a hill, the name being the aboriginal word for the summit. And here, again, is a charming woodland spot that is called "Lowana, a word that once meant a young girl. But now the language is dead, and so are the young girls of the departed race—dead beyond recall. Something in the low, soft music of these Tasmanian words suggests the Maori language, and yet the ethnologists find no affinity between the two races.

From the entrance of the river up to the King Gorge you may look from the railway carriage window upon river scenery of rare beauty. Travellers from older lands, accustomed to majestic rivers that wind their way between trim banks and daisied water meadows, find the wild beauty of these Tasmanian streams quite captivating, for there is a headlong gaiety in their sunnier moods that is strikingly original, and a pensive charm of melancholy in the lonely solitudes that is seldom reached by any English river. The English river is like the well-brought up English girl, very beautiful, very gracious, very serene, but, as some feminologists aver, a thought too trim, a shade too prim, a *soupçon* two self-conscious, to be truly natural. The Tasmanian river in this remote north-west, at any rate, is a true child of the frontier: imperious, audacious, and undisciplined, full of wild loveliness, and beautiful alike in storm and calm. Further away, if the stranger should visit the Tamar or the Derwent, he will find many points of resemblance to the quieter beauties of those distant streams in the underworld; but here the loveliness is untutored, natural, and frankly half-barbaric.

As the train creeps round the sidling of the mountain, one looks across the dark, broad river, far below, to an immense wall of wooded range, five hundred feet in height. Down near the water are huge tree ferns, and the flowering scrub of sassafrass and leatherwood, with here and there a crimson waratah that glows like flame amid the green. The myrtles stand up, shoulder to shoulder, dressed in tones that vary between the richest russet of an English autumn and the brightest emerald of an Irish spring, while, among them, one may pick out stray clumps of blackwood, or the tall, straight boles of the Huon pine.

Towering high above the myrtles are belts of the giant gums that invariably hold the crests of the hills, and when the sunshine gilds all this vast mass of variegated foliage, a gorgeous feast of colour is presented to the watching traveller.

But beautiful as is the scene above, it is far transcended when Nature, like a mighty artist, paints a whole gallery of glorious landscapes on the surface of the river. The reflections in the water give more delight, perhaps, than the originals, on account of that tendency which Browning analyses so clearly in "Fra Lippo Lippi," when he explains how art gives beauty, even to the common-place. You see no beauty in

> "Yon cullion's hanging face—a bit of chalk,
> And, trust me, but you should though."

So is it with these reflections, and the eye that might pass by the loveliness of tapering spars and feathery foliage on the mountains sees all their beauty made manifest when the clear surface of the river reveals them so exquisitely delineated, and with such just perspective and masterly massing of the foliage and the shadows that all the charm of outline and of colour seems to be redoubled in that sub-aqueous



Beattie, Photo, Hobart

The Abt Section
of the Mount Lyell Railway.

fairy-land. In such a stream as this, Narcissus must have looked when he fell in love with his own image, mirrored in the bright water.

Past the grotesquely-named station at "Dubbil-barril," which at first sight seems to carry a sinister suggestion of the rifles that once brought doom to the aboriginals, the train sweeps on towards the King Gorge. It is a relief to find that "Dubbil-barril" conveys no direct allusion to weapons of destruction, and that the name was given to the place by a party of gold prospectors, who found the river divided here into two branches by a long, wooded island.

At King Gorge the happy picnickers from Queenstown find a woodland Elysium, which is reached by means of a cage that crosses the river on a wire hawser. Once across the river, a well-made track allures one to a walk that is well worth the taking; and, indeed, the ranges hereabouts are intersected with old pack-tracks that enable even a tyro in the bush to see all its beauties. In the summer there are Sunday excursions to the King Gorge, and it is a spot that certainly should not be missed.

Presently the train begins to climb more slowly, and one discovers that the section of the line which has been constructed on the Abt system has been reached, and that the engine, which is fitted with a central cogged wheel, is carefully working its way along the rack-rail laid down between the ordinary metals. It reaches the highest point on the line, pauses for a drink of water, and then gingerly descends, still feeling its way along the toothed rack-rail on the falling gradient. And so, through gorge and gully, round the sidlings, and over many tall bridges that span the creeks, it sweeps along, until the snows on Mount Owen gleam nearer and clearer through rifts in fleecy clouds, and at last we enter the wide,

open plain in which Queenstown has grown up with the rapidity of a tropical plant, and in which the pale fumes from the smelters are slowly curling upwards, to melt and mingle with the clouds upon Mount Owen's brow.

It is just an ordinary mining township, this Queenstown, and as it rests there in the valley, under the shadow of Mount Owen, there would be nothing remarkable about it but for its extreme youth.

Consider, however, that these well-made streets and well-stocked warehouses and palatial hotels have all risen within the last two or three years from the aboriginal swamp, and there is a good deal to marvel at. The comforts of the Empire Hotel would be not unusual in a more settled country, but one finds it strange indeed to find luxury in the wilderness. Between the charred and blackened ranges opposite, where the bush fires have been sweeping, and the stainless snows upon Mount Owen's crest, a town has been built upon the copper ore won from that other mountain just behind yonder ridge.

You can see, at intervals, black spots sailing across the blue sky far up beyond the township. These are the ore buckets, that pass in long procession over the aerial ropeway from the mine to the smelters, and, after a proportional part has been tipped at the sampling house, are conducted to the ore-bins, where their contents, all carefully graded, await the ordeal by fire.

The smelters are the great sight of Queenstown, and for all the hideous ugliness of the sluggish fumes that rise incessantly from the chimney-tops, and the pungent and pervading odour of sulphur that assails the nose of the visitor, there is an extraordinary fascination in watching the transmutation of the metals that here goes on under the direction of that

most subtle alchemist, Mr. Sticht, the general manager, who was induced to come over from America.

There are many different kinds of copper ore, and there are many different ways of treating them. Mr. Sticht, like a skilful and experienced physician, familiarised himself with the constitution of the material upon which his skill was to be tested, and then argued out the only line of treatment applicable. Theory and experience both pointed to blast furnaces, and Mr. Sticht, in spite of the misgivings of many of the public and some professional brethren, designed and erected a complete plant for smelting the ore in blast furnaces. Now, a great objection to the ordinary blast furnace is the enormous quantity of fuel which it consumes, and coke is an expensive luxury in the wilds of western Tasmania. Mr. Sticht thought over the problem, and hit upon a brilliant idea, suggested by his American experience. Why should not the ore be made to act as its own fuel, and to smelt itself? The high percentages of iron and sulphur in the ore were a valuable supply of fuel, and, to cut the story short, the furnaces were set in order, with absolute certainty in the mind of Mr. Sticht that only a small amount of coke would be needed to assist the heat latent in the ore, to smelt the metals out of it. And so it proved. This beautiful idea, marvellous in its simplicity, and also in its effectiveness, was translated into action. The alchemist had discovered the real secret of the transmutation of metals. He would turn the ore into "matte," the matte into "blister copper," and the blister copper into gold by the simple operation of placing it on the metal market.

To go round the smelting furnaces, under the guidance of Mr. Sticht, is a liberal education in metallurgy, while, from the point of view of pure spectacle, no transformation scene of the most gorgeous

pantomime ever staged could compare with the brilliancy of the illuminations.

Take a peep at the smelters by night. It is pitch dark outside, but the smelting-house is lit by gleams of many-coloured fires that show up the stalwart forms of the men who feed the furnaces. A glimpse into one of these furnaces is an experience that is almost terrifying. There are indirect scientific methods of measuring the heat, and one learns with a real feeling of awe that the temperature inside the blast furnace is about 4,000 degrees Fahrenheit, while the air-blast, which is driven by powerful engines, into each furnace, is heated to 650 degrees Fahrenheit. One would say that nothing could resist such heat, and that the hardest and most uncompromising material would be reduced, either to a fluid or a vapour when subjected to it.

But, strangely enough—and this is one of the most beautiful provisions of Nature, that the chemistry of the metallurgist has brought to light—there are certain substances which decline to fuse, even in intense heat, if subjected to it by themselves, but which smelt readily when associated with other substances for which they have an affinity. That, of course, is commonplace knowledge to the chemical engineer; but the lay spectator is apt to regard it with great curiosity. Why should it happen that this ore, which is rich in iron pyrites and sulphur, will not smelt properly, i.e., economically, unless a liberal admixture of silica is superimposed in furnace? And why should it happen, also, that the ore from adjoining mines, which is deficient in iron pyrites, will not smelt by itself at all, but will smelt readily if mixed with the Mount Lyell ore? The metallurgist knows that this is so, but he cannot give any satisfactory explanation as to why it is so. That is one of Nature's secrets.

There is not much, apparently, that Mr. Sticht does not know in connection with the treatment of copper ores, and the extent of his knowledge may be conjectured from the circumstances that with practically nothing else but a billet of wood, a shovelful of coke, and a lump of ore from the heart of Mount Lyell, he will produce you a piece of metal containing 99 per cent. of pure copper, and the balance in silver and gold, with a few insignificant trifling decimals of other substances.

The machinery by which he performs this miracle has all been designed by himself and a corps of excellent assistants, and erected under his supervision. In the grey matter of the brain of that quiet and highly-cultivated gentleman were born the well reasoned deductions from which sprang first the engines to create the blast, then the fires to heat the blast; then the lines of mighty furnaces into which the blast is driven before it generates the furious heat in which the ore and added quartz lose their identity, and mingle in a mighty bath of molten liquid, from which, separated by the inexorable laws that govern specific gravity, come two fiery golden streams, one of molten metal, and the other of molten stone. The molten metal is carefully poured into moulds for further treatment, and the molten stone, cooled by a never failing jet of water that is conveniently placed, is turned into the waste product that is known as "slag."

The molten metal, called "matte," contains about 15 per cent. of copper, the rest being sulphur and iron, and some silver and gold; but this product is not readily marketable, and the metallurgist has consequently hit upon the happy thought of still further enriching the percentage of copper by a second fiery ordeal. Into the fire, then, goes the matte again, and with the addition of its affinity, in the shape of quartz, is once more reduced

to a glowing liquid, which, when purified by the filtering out of extraneous waste matter, is found by the analyst to contain about 50 per cent. of copper, and about 25 per cent. each of sulphur and iron, as well as a now increased amount of silver and gold. This product, called "converter matte," is next re-molten in a smaller furnace, and conveyed straight from the furnace into the "converter," a huge vessel, thickly lined with clay, where it sizzles and bubbles, under the influence of an air-blast that enters the vessel at the bottom, and rushes up through the liquid metal, with a roaring like the roaring of a hurricane. Up from the nozzle of the "converter" into a handy flue, and so away to the chimneys, go the fumes of the sulphur that is slowly and reluctantly expelled from the molten mass. The clay lining absorbs all of the iron, and is poured out in the form of slag, when the process is half done, leaving nothing but a rich matte of about 80 per cent. in the vessel. This bath is further blown into to remove the sulphur that remained, and finally the copper is alone left behind as a beautiful rich golden liquid, with a greenish tinge about its vapour, to be drawn off into moulds which harden into that excellent and valuable commodity known as "blister copper."

It is perfectly fascinating to watch these moulds of glowing liquid that sparkles like champagne, and throws up fountains of copper spray, caused by the action of the gases in the metal. Beyond the stage of blister copper we cannot follow it. It is left to the refiners at Baltimore, U.S.A., to extract the fractional percentages of gold and silver from the cakes of metal, and reduce the mass to practically pure copper.

An afternoon, or, better still, an evening spent at the smelters is an eye-opener in the processes of metallurgy, and one is apt to regard the self-possessed

gentleman who has devised all this, and much more that must be left undescribed, with feelings not unmixed with superstitious awe.

Leave the smelters and take a walk over the ranges to the Mount Lyell Mine itself, and also to the North Mount Lyell, both of which are producing immense quantities of copper ore, differing much in character and in the treatment necessary for the extraction of the metal. From the path leading to the North Mount Lyell Mine, a visitor may get a splendid view of the great Mount Lyell open cut, one of the most productive copper mines on the face of the globe. It is late in the afternoon, and snow is falling in thick, heavy flakes; but the spectacle is a supérb one, and cold and wet are both forgotten in the absorption of watching such a strange and inspiring scene.

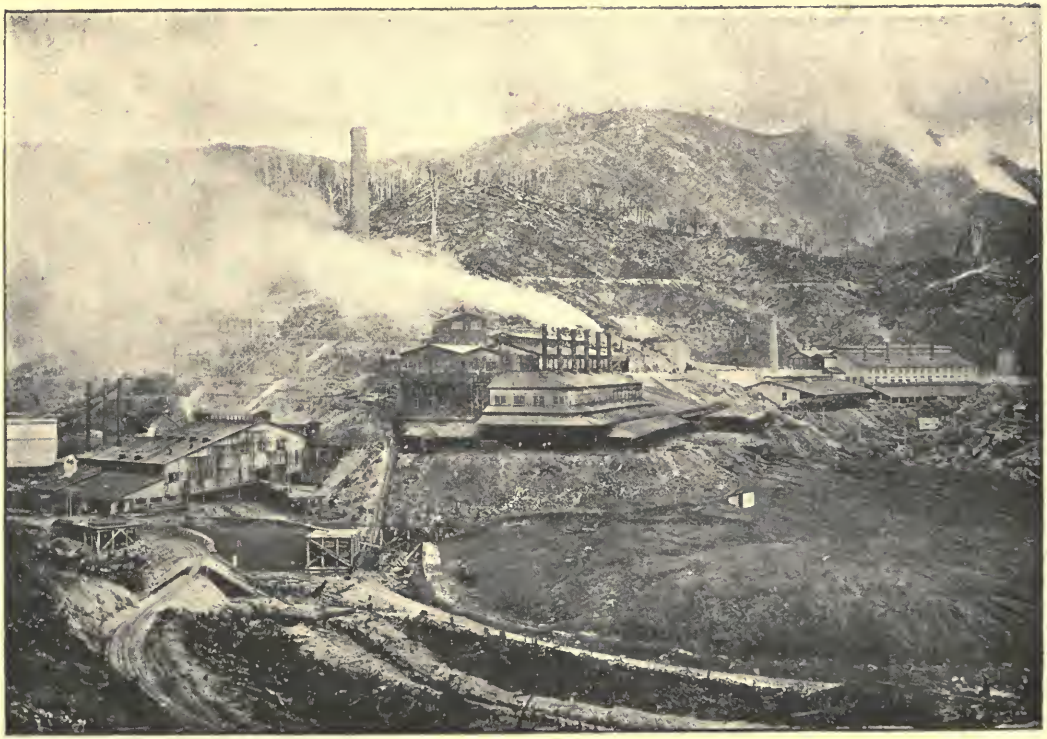
Yonder, across the valley, stands the mountain, with its whole face cut into terraces that seem to rise, tier on tier, until they almost reach the clouds. It looks like a gigantic fort, and the illusion is heightened by the flag that has just been run up on the flagstaff rising from the summit. What a defensive position it would make, and how desperate would be the chances of a forlorn hope ordered to the assault! The falling snow is driven slantwise across the valley by a wind that whistles over the mountain tops, and the flag that is flying from the fortress yonder is sometimes almost lost to sight altogether. Imagination again reverts to the idea of a defended position. Was the fire-swept plateau on terrible Spion Kop anything like that?

Suddenly, as if in answer to the unspoken thought the roar of heavy artillery bursts upon the ear from the mountain opposite, and the reverberations peal and echo away far down the valley. Again and again comes the thunder of bombardment, and in a moment

it is as though a hundred batteries of field guns were speaking at once. Up through the driving snow soar huge projectiles from the masked batteries, mingled with the finer hail of shrapnel, and for fully five minutes the bombardment continues, with a succession of crashing explosions. Then the falling snow shuts out the mountain completely, and at last the echoes die away, and all is silence.

It was not a bombardment after all, and there are no dead men lying out yonder on the lower slopes, with the snow for their winding sheet, like the troops that fell at Hohenlinden. It was only the customary evening fusilade of the miners firing explosives in the "open cut," to break down ore in readiness for next day's operations.

After a call on the hospitable managing director of the North Mount Lyell Mine, perched in his eyrie on the hill-top, and a tour of inspection through tunnels and stopes, where work is being energetically prosecuted, and ore is being extracted for treatment in the smelting furnaces at the neighbouring township of Crotty, one may take the train on the North Mount Lyell Company's railway, and travel down to Kelly Basin, en route by boat for Strahan. From Strahan back to Zeehan is only a short trip, and, freshened and rested by a night at the Grand Hotel, one is ready for a charming outing next day to Williamsford, by the North-east Dundas Mountain Railway.



Mt. Lyell Smelters and Converters. *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

CHAPTER VI.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

"Will ye no come back again."—Jacobite Song.

IT almost seems as though every mile of this little 2-foot gauge mountain line had its own waterfall. The air is musical with the tinkle of streams, and from the platform of the carriage one can see the leatherwood scrub that has a flower like orange blossom, the flowering sassafrass, the blooms of the wild laurel, and sometimes a crimson waratah, or the dainty petals of the Blandfordia lily. Scarcely has the train passed over the top of the Argent Falls when the Fraser Falls come into view above the line, with a leap of nearly 100 feet, and then, swinging round a curve, one opens up the Montezuma Falls, that rush in a succession of leaps from a height of 360 feet into the channel of the watercourse below.

The first leap is 150 feet in height, and, when a heavy volume of water is flowing, with the sun turning the spray into diamonds, it is a sight to linger long in the memory. Geologists tell us that waterfalls denote the youthfulness of a river. It is only in an old age, extending back for uncounted æons, that a river attains to the slow and measured pace which is characteristic of advanced years. Judged by that test, the Montezuma Creek must be a veritable child among rivers, for it is practically nothing but a succession of waterfalls.

By and by, when the present inhabitants of Tasmania have been replaced by a race of creatures with atrophied limbs and enormous heads, to accommodate the abnormal brain development of the future, the Montezuma Creek, levelled and chastened by the inexorable processes of erosion and corrosion, may flow along as peacefully, or, one might even say, as sluggishly as the Yarra. If such a thing should ever come to pass, the big-headed people of the future will at any rate miss a glorious and inspiring sight.

Williamsford at ten o'clock in the morning!

The mists are curling along the valley far below, and clinging to the hillsides. Then the vapour closes in thickly, and it begins to snow. The outlook is not promising. But we have come out for an Alpine ascent to-day, and there must be no drawing back. High up on the right towers Mount Read, over 3,500 feet high, and we must get to the summit somehow. There is a mine on the top, and we are bound to see it.

Fortunately there are more ways of getting up a mountain than walking up it, and the Hercules Gold and Silver Mining Company have constructed a means of ascent which is admirably calculated to save exertion, though it promotes apprehension. This is a double trolley line that ascends the face of the mountain with a perfectly straight course, the ore-laden trucks which descend from the summit hauling up the empties on the opposite line, through the agency of a stout steel hawser, worked from an engine-room far up, at the moment of this first visit, among the clouds.

The line is a mile long, or it would perhaps be more correct to say, a mile high, for, in some parts it rises with a gradient of 1 in 2. A fly that is thoroughly experienced in the art of climbing up a perpendicular

wall would make light of the ascent of Mount Read, no doubt, but a mere tourist is inclined to jib at the job. However, it may not be so bad as it looks, and one takes one's seat in an empty trolley with a stout heart and a silent prayer that the rope may stand the strain.

It takes half an hour to ascend Mount Read, in this novel and thrilling style, and the view that opens up continuously, as the ascent proceeds, is more than worth the apparent risk. An immense panorama of range and valley, river and waterfall, unfolds itself on every side. The air has the real Alpine "bite" in it. When half the journey has been completed we begin to see little drifts of snow at the side of the line. The drifts get bigger, and they lie closer together the higher we go up. Presently there is a crisp and sparkling carpet nearly a foot thick all along the line. And as we step out of the truck at the engine-house, our feet make no sound on the yielding surface.

"Oh, goodness, it was cold!" The burden of the old pantomime song comes back to memory with real appropriateness upon the top of Mount Read, where Mr. Sydney Thow, the general manager, resides, with the principal officers of the mine. Mr. Thow has a comfortable little house, with a big fire burning in the fireplace, and from his hospitable home, high up in cloudland, a magnificent view, that is ever changing in character, through the infinite variations of cloud and sunshine and shadow, perpetually unrolls itself.

Sometimes the vapour, settling in a basin in the hills, is exactly like an inland sea—an effect that travellers who have climbed Mount Buffalo, in Victoria, will remember to have seen there. Then, when the clouds open out, and a patch of sunlit, sapphire sky reveals itself, the eye can travel far away to

little Ringville, nestling in the valley at the feet of the mighty mountains. The roofs are glistening in the morning air. How exquisitely expressive is Tennyson's line, descriptive of a distant town among the hills, when he writes:—

"The city sparkles like a grain of salt."

That is Ringville on a frosty morning.

There is an assaying house at the mine, and here one may see the modern alchemists at their work. That gentleman yonder, in his shirt-sleeves, is not a mere assayer. He is a Rosicrucian, engaged in the deepest of mysteries, and his little earthen pots, that glow with white heat in the heart of the assaying stove, contain a molten mass, from which, presently, after various rites and ceremonies, he will extract a grain of pure gold. See! he pounds up a small lump of ore, fresh from the mine, and mixes it with certain carefully-weighed portions of silica and litharge, which are its chemical affinities, and without which it will not readily smelt. Then into the earthenware pipkin goes the mixture, and into the heart of the stove



goes the pipkin, where it remains until the molten contents have quite ceased to bubble. Then the Rosicrucian removes the vessel from the fire by means of a big pair of pincers, and when the waste matter has been eliminated there remains a button of lead—and other things. The button of lead is placed in a smaller pot, the sides of which are lined with bone-dust, and again melted; gradually the lead sinks down, and is absorbed by the hungry bone-dust, while on the top of the dark-coloured mass appears a small globule of silver—like a pellet of silver shot.

The Rosicrucian has not finished his task yet. What will he do next? Ah! He places the silver pellet in a glass test-tube, pours about two teaspoonfuls of pure nitric acid on top of it, and watches the acid boil and bubble, until all the silver has disappeared, and nothing remains but a little grain of gold—the indestructible residue that has survived the double ordeal by fire, and the dissolving force of the potent acid. It is a beautiful process, and so simple—when you know just how to do it.

"You had better go down with them, Jim," said the prudent manager, as he wished his visitors good-bye, and ordered their carriage round.

The descent of Mount Read looks a trifle more alarming even than the ascent, but Jim is most reassuring. Oh, yes, there have been accidents, certainly, but not lately. Besides, the rope is a new one, and there is really nothing to fear now. At the same time, he will accompany us down, just as an extra precaution.

Jim takes his place on the back of the truck, and arranges himself in the shape of an equilateral triangle, the apex of which is formed by the patch on

the seat of his trousers, while his arms form one side, and his legs another. The base is made by the back stanchion of the truck. A reference to the accompanying diagram will explain the problem clearly, though one leg of the triangle, so to speak, appears to have a slight wobble at the knees. Before the journey is over, one is not sorry to have the society of Jim.



"You see, mister, it's this way," he remarks. "When she comes to the dip in the line, naterally the rope goes up in the air, and if it wasn't for my weight on the back of the truck, the hind wheels would go up in the air too, an' it might be a bit orkard."

It certainly might be a bit awkward to fall 3,000 feet down the side of the cliff, and land on one's head on the mullock-heap at the bottom. One is grateful to Jim, and one fervently hopes that there may be no falling off as far as he is concerned.

A drive in a light spring-cart from Williamsford to Rosebery is the next stage in the journey, and it is



On the Stitt River. *Beattie, Photo., Hobart*

one of the most delightful experiences of the whole trip. The road, in many places, resembles the famous Huon Road at Hobart, with unfathomable gorges dipping sheer down from the track, and curving undulations that perpetually reveal new vistas of range and plain and distant snow-capped peak. At Rosebery we get the Emu Bay Railway Company's train, and so back to Burnie.

Few lovelier places for a summer holiday can be found within easy distance by parched Australians than this little township on the shores of Emu Bay. Round the corner and away from the business part of the town is West Burnie, the residential portion, with the slope above the sea dotted with many houses and a smooth, sandy beach, running down to the water. There are bathing boxes up against the cliff, and here in the summer come Naiads, frolicking in the foam; or, if you prefer a statement of bald fact, ladies, who bob up and down, with the water not above their knees. The gentlemen's bathing boxes are placed at a discreet distance, for "mixed bathing" has not yet made its appearance at Burnie.

There is splendid fishing in the bay, and there are many beautiful walks and drives along the coast towards Launceston or Devonport. Best of all, the mercury in the thermometer seldom goes higher than 85 deg. Fahrenheit at Burnie. Think of that, ye perspiring dwellers on the mainland, when a "brickfielder" is blowing, and life is a weariness that even iced lemon-squashes cannot help or mend.

But life, unfortunately, is not all a holiday, and the "Flora" is already blowing her whistle at the pier. Good-bye, sweet land of the myrtle and the pine, the mountain and the waterfall. And yet, not good-bye, for the snow-capped peaks are always calling, and one learns to understand the yearning of Azucena,

the Gipsy, as she sang with Manrico the haunting strains of her "Ai nostri monti." And so, in Azucena's language, we will say, not Good-bye, but "a rivederci."

Omar Khayyam, or, rather, his accomplished translator, has sung of the Paradisiacal pleasures of—

> "A Book of Verses underneath a Bough,
> A loaf of bread, a jug of wine, and Thou
> Beside me, singing in the wilderness."

But Omar Khayyam was not the only Epicurean who belonged to the great army of the minor poets. A certain genial gentleman who wrote lyrics in the palmy days of Augustus found a theme for his song in the myrtle—what a familiar word it is in Tasmania—and it is really surprising to note how closely akin is his little ode, only eight lines altogether, to Omar's famous stanza, as filtered through Mr. Fitzgerald. However, only old fogies confess to having time to read poetry in a dead language nowadays, so one may, with diffidence, venture upon a new version, in the vulgar tongue. Here goes:—

> Away with Persian pomp; away
> With garlands twined on linden-spray,
> No late-blown rose I ask to-day,
> To deck the wine.
> But bind the myrtle in thy hair,
> The modest wreath I'd have thee wear,
> And I will deem the myrtle fair,
> Here, 'neath the vine.

And so the myrtles of Tasmania, although they were not the myrtles that the famous lyrist celebrated, have taken us, via Teheran and Rome, to the old doctrine which the American gentleman tersely summed up when he said, "Enjoy yourself while you can, because you will be a long time dead."

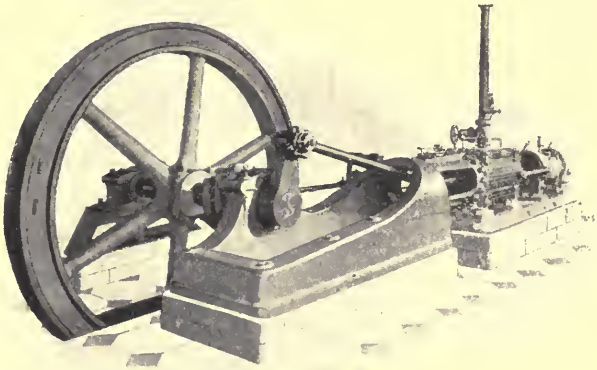
And the present vague and shadowy scribe, with his hand upon his phantasmal heart, hereby solemnly and sincerely declares that one of the very best ways of enjoying yourself that you can find, is to follow his example, and take a holiday trip to the great north-west of Tasman's Land.



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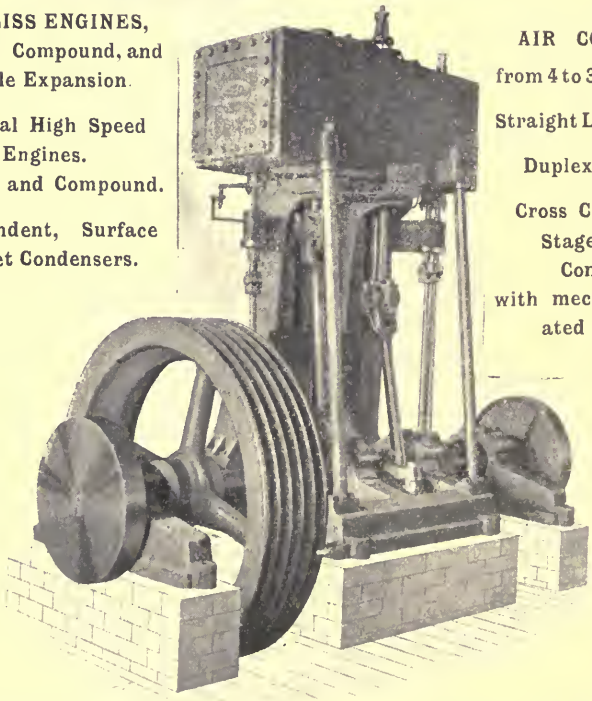
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	a.m.	p.m.
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Guildford Jun. arr.	9 35	5 0
Do. dep.	9 50	Goods Only.
	p.m.	
Rosebery dep. ..	12 3	
Zeehan arr. ..	1 0	

	a.m.	p.m.
Zeehan dep. ..	Goods Only.	2 5
Rosebery dep. ..		3 10
Guildford Jun. arr.		5 35
Do. dep.	10 15	5 50
	p m.	
Burnie arr. ..	12 30	8 0

Trains connect WARATAH & GUILDFORD JUNCTION, as under:—

	a.m.	p.m.
Waratah dep ..	8 40	4 40
Guildford Jun. arr.	9 20	5 20

	a m.	p.m.
Guildford J. dep.	10 0	6 0
Waratah arr. ..	10 40	6 40

Note.—The Goods Train only runs when required. Passengers may travel in the van on paying First Class fare, and must sign Risk Notes.

FARES.—ORDINARY.

	Waratah.				Rosebery.				Zeehan.			
	Single.		Return.		Single.		Return.		Single.		Return.	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Burnie to ..	15 0	12 6	25 0	20 0	23 8	17 9	35 6	26 7	29 4	22 0	44 0	33 0
Waratah to	..	..	..	..	14 8	11 0	22 0	16 6	20 4	15 3	30 6	22 10
Rosebery to	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	5 8	4 3	8 6	6 4

EXCURSION.

Burnie to ..	..	..	18 9	15 8	..	..	29 7	22 2	..	..	36 8	27 6
Waratah to	..	..	..	..	..	..	18 4	13 9	..	..	25 5	19 1
Rosebery to	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	7 1	5 4

ZEEHAN—MOUNT DUNDAS.

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Parties of not less than ten will be carried at reduced fares.

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Further information may be obtained on application to the following:—

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Zeehan dep. ..	8 0	2 15	Regatta Pt. dep. ..	10 20	4 35
Strahan Whf. dep.	9 55	4 10	Strahan Whf. dep.	10 45	5 0
Regatta Pt. arr. ..	10 5	4 20	Zeehan arr. ..	12 45	7 0

FARES.

	Ordinary.				Excursion.	
	Single.		Return.		Return.	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
Zeehan to Strahan Whf.	4 4	2 11	8 8	5 10	4 10	3 8
Zeehan to Regatta Pnt.	4 6	3 0	9 0	6 0	5 0	3 9

ZEEHAN—WILLIAMSFORD.

Miles.		a.m.		p.m.
0	Zeehan dep. ..	7 45	Williamsford dep.	3 0
14½	Montezuma dep. ..	9 48	Montezuma dep. ..	3 40
18	Williamsford arr.	10 23	Zeehan arr. ..	5 40

FARES.

Ordinary—First Class, 4d. per mile; Second, 3d. per mile. Return—Fare-and-a-half. Excursion—Return Tickets at Single Fares.

Note.—A conveyance runs between Williamsford and Rosebery daily.

MOUNT LYELL MINING & RAILWAY CO. LTD.

REGATTA POINT—QUEENSTOWN.

	p.m.		a.m.
Regatta Point dep ..	4 25	Queenstown dep ..	8 0
Queenstown arr. ..	6 35	Regatta Point arr. ..	10 0

Note.—Goods Trains, with Passenger carriages attached, run only when required for Goods Traffic. Information from Station Masters.

FARES.

Between Regatta Point and Queenstown—Ordinary, Single, 7s. 6d. Return, 11s.; Excursions, 5s. 2d.

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28	LINDA arr.	4 40	KELLY BASIN arr. ..	11 50

FARES.

First Class, 4d. per mile. Second Class, 3d. per mile. Returns, fare-and-a-half.

NOTE.—A Steamer runs from Strahan Wharf to Kelly Basin daily (except Thursdays) at 10 a.m. On Thursdays at 8 a.m. returning from Kelly Basin daily at 2 p.m.

The foregoing information has been obtained from published Time Tables and is subject to alteration from time to time.

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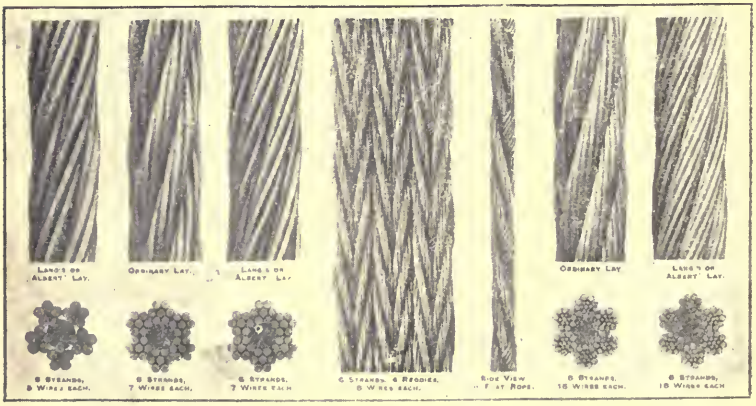
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LIMITED.

The Emu Bay Railway Company Limited is registered with a nominal share capital of £600,000, consisting of 100,000 preference and 500,000 ordinary shares, of which all the preference and 260,000 ordinary shares have been issued. A debenture issue of £400,000 was provided for, and £200,000 of this amount was floated in London in 1899. The Act of Parliament which granted concessions to the Company provided for the issue of a primary lease by the Tasmanian Government, for a term of 30 years at a nominal rent, of the land required for the Railway to Rosebery or Zeehan, and for renewal for further periods not exceeding 21 years. The Government of Tasmania reserve power after the expiration of 21 years, to resume the railways upon payment of the cost of construction plus 20 per cent.

The formation of The Emu Bay Railway Company Limited was proposed with the object of removing the supreme obstacle, which previously existed, to the prosperous development of the vast mineral wealth of the Western Division of Tasmania, by providing suitable railway communication with a convenient deep-water port. Emu Bay is a safe port readily

accessible to vessels of large tonnage and exceptionally well situated for the convenient disposal of the passenger and shipping traffic of the great mineral country with which it has been brought into connection.

The Emu Bay Railway Company Limited took over the line from Burnie to Waratah, which was built originally by the Van Dieman's Land Company as a horse tram with wooden rails, and was opened on 1st February, 1878. The line was converted into a railway in 1884, and was worked at first by the Emu Bay and Mount Bischoff Railway Company. It was leased and taken over by the present Company in October, 1897. With the exception of the last 2½ miles into Waratah, which are on land leased from the Tasmanian Government, this railway is built on the Van Dieman's Land Company's lands. The length of the line is 48 miles with a gauge of 3 feet 6 inches, being the same as that of the Tasmanian Government Railways. Between Burnie and Waratah are the Wey, Hellyer, and Waratah Rivers. English Trout have been acclimatised in the first two of these rivers, and have thriven wonderfully. The land which is of basaltic formation is cultivated for the first 14 miles out of Burnie, and after that is bush country. At Hampshire Plains, 20 miles from Burnie, the line reaches an elevation of 1,600 feet, and at Guildford Junction the elevation is 2,035 feet, the line thence dropping slightly to Waratah where it is 1,967 feet above sea level. At Waratah are the Mount Bischoff and West Mount Bischoff Tin Mines, while in the district are the Magnet Silver Mining Company, Long Tunnel Prospecting Association, Confidence, Bell's Reward, and others. The timber along the line consists of stringy bark, and myrtle, with occasional patches of celery top pine.

The line from Guildford Junction to Rayna, 2 miles from Zeehan, was constructed by The Emu Bay Railway Company. The length of this line is 48½ miles, the gauge being 3 feet 6 inches and steel rails of 61 lbs. being laid down. The ruling grade is 1 in 40, and the sharpest curves are 5 chains radius. The longest gradient runs for 7 miles at 1 in 40 on the Boko

Sideling. For the first 12 miles from Guildford Junction the line runs through basaltic country, and thence to Zeehan through schist formations. The first 11 miles of the line is on the land of the Van Dieman's Land Company and the remainder is on land leased from the Tasmanian Government. The timber along the line consists principally of stringy bark and myrtle, with some blackwood and celery top pine. In the gullies there is sassafras and leatherwood, and on some of the hills King Billy Pine, a very free-splitting, useful timber, which. when better known, should be commercially valuable. Heavy patches of dense scrub are met with, principally "horizontal" and baueri. For the first 11 miles the line passes through easy country, thence the country becomes heavier and the line runs through some fine gorges. On the Que sideling in about 5 miles, 300,000 cubic yards of earthwork have been excavated. There are also some heavy and hard cuttings on the Boko sideling. The hardest ground is about the Pieman River, the rock here being very hard metamorphosed schist. Between Guildford Junction and Rayna the principal rivers and creeks crossed by the line are the Hellyer, the Hadfield, the Que, the Bulgobac, the Boko, the Pieman, the Stitt, the Ring, the Argent, and the Little Henty. A timber trestle-bridge spans the Que River, and a timber pile-bridge the Bulgobac. At the Pieman crossing there is a steel girder bridge with concrete abutments and piers; two spans are of 25 feet each, and one is of 150 feet while the height above the water is 70 feet. The bridge across the Stitt River is of steel trestles and girders, 4 spans being of 30 feet each and one of 60 feet, the height of the bridge is 60 feet. At the Ring River the bridge is of steel trestles and girders, 9 spans being of 30 feet and one of 15 feet, while the height is 84 feet. A wooden trestle-bridge spans the Argent River, having 7 spans of 20 feet, with a height of 40 feet.

There are several cuttings up to 60 feet, one of the deepest in the line being 80 feet through solid rock.

The Argent Tunnel, 44½ miles from Guildford Junction, carries the single line, it has a clear height of 14 feet and is 440 yards long. It is lined throughout the walls and arch

with concrete, and cost £30,000 to construct, the height of the saddle which has been pierced is 260 feet above the tunnel.

The principal mines at Rosebery are the Tasmanian Copper Company and the Primrose Mining Company. At Mount Read, six miles from the line, there are the Hercules and Mount Read Mines (Gold, Silver and Lead), while the Colebrook Rennision Bell, the Confidence (Tin), the Owen Meredith (Silver), and others, are all close to the line between Rosebery and Zeehan.

The highest point of the line is reached at a distance of 6 miles from Guildford Junction, where the elevation is 2,306 feet. At Hadfield Plains 10 miles out, it is 2,000 feet, at the Pieman River it is 490 feet, and at Zeehan 533 feet.

At the 21-Mile the line junctions with the Farrell Tramway, which is 8½ miles long, with wooden rails and a 2-foot gauge. The Farrell district lies about 6 miles east of the line, and includes the North Mount Farrell Mine, the Mount Farrell, the Osborne Blocks, the Murchison Prospecting Association, and a number of prospecting shows.

The cost of the railway line to Zeehan, with rolling stock, etc., was £363,000, of which surveys cost £14,000. The work of construction was begun in October, 1897, and the line was opened for traffic in December, 1900. It was constructed by day labor by the Company.

The Zeehan-Dundas line was bought by the Emu Bay Railway Company from the Mount Dundas and Zeehan Company in 1899 for £22,500. It is 7½ miles in length, with a gauge of 3 feet 6 inches, and 40lb steel rails are in use. The line runs from Zeehan to Dundas and Maestris, at the foot of Mount Dundas 4,000 feet high, and serves the Comet Mine.

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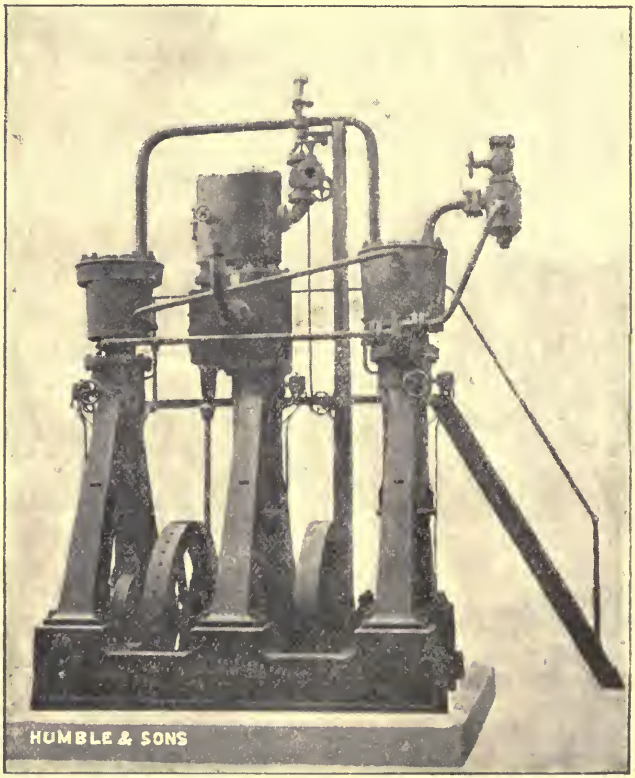
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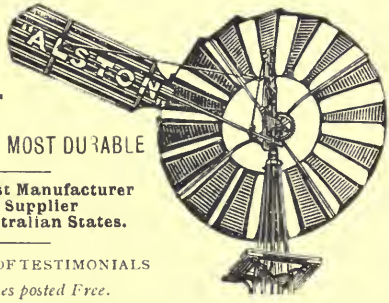
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